

**Contributions to Sustainability Practices of Faith Communities in Canada:
The roles of learning, action and faith**

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Abstract

In a world of environmental crisis, set-backs, and political cloudiness, learning provides a bridge for individuals to achieve sustainability through action at a grass-roots level and beyond. My research explored the learning for sustainability that occurs in faith-communities in Canada. Faith-communities provide a unique platform for considering learning and sustainability due to their ability to organize, their institutional strengths and weaknesses, and the role of personal faith in people's lives. Learning for sustainability was examined through qualitative questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and participant observation in two case studies of faith-communities in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Learning opportunities available within the faith-communities included organized activities, communication, and hands-on application. The resulting learning outcomes were broad and included categories such as waste management and energy use. Some learning outcomes resulted in action, which served to further disseminate sustainability both inside and outside the faith community.

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to Julian-Joseph Gerardy, you were some of the best news I received while writing my thesis.

Abbreviations

CST: Catholic Social Teaching

EC: Environment Committee

FC: Faith Community

GAC: Green Action Committee

TLT: Transformative Learning Theory

UUCW: The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg

UU: Unitarian Universalist

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Current global social-ecological systems are threatened by biodiversity loss, climate change, land degradation and other human induced impacts that are contributing to an environmental crisis (Steffen *et al.*, 2011; Steffen *et al.*, 2007). Sustainability is increasingly viewed as a possible solution, or way to minimize, such ecological threats. Sustainability is a broad concept that recommends an ideal state where the environment, equality in resource distribution, and efficient resource allocation in the economy are preserved (Johnston, 2013). Many scholars (e.g., Grim, 2013; Smith and Pulver, 2009; Ball, 1999) suggest that individual and group worldview transformations are required to elicit a ‘change in consciousness’ to shift belief and action to align with concepts of sustainability and sustainable practices. Others suggest that such changes can be encouraged through environmental education and learning opportunities, communication and information sharing, reflection, and inspiring connection (e.g., Hitzhusen, 2012; Moyer, 2015). And some of these suggest that faith communities are increasingly seen as potential facilitators to ‘transform consciousness’ through unique motivators, sustainable action, and engagement (Grim, 2013; Veldman *et al.*, 2014; Johnston, 2013; Ellingson *et al.*, 2012; Moyer, 2015; Lee and Kong, 2015; Jurdi *et al.*, 2017; Bomberg & Hague, 2018).

Faith can potentially influence environmental beliefs, an outcome that offers a unique set of motivators for individuals to engage with sustainability (Biviano, 2012; Seifert and Shaw, 2013; Koehresena, 2018). With the appropriate message, faith communities can connect values with the environment (Seifert and Shaw, 2013). For example, many pro-environmental faith groups engage in ethics-based environmentalism, which attempts to change values, attitudes, and

societal behaviours through promotion and communication (Smith and Pulver, 2009). Eco-theological ethics provides an ethical framework and approach for engaging in sustainable behaviour (Ellingson *et al.*, 2012; Kearns, 1996; Jurdi *et al.*, 2017; Kidwell *et al.* 2018). Conservative, mainline and Liberal Christian theologies are represented as Christian Stewardship, Eco-Justice, and Creation Spirituality ethics respectively (Kearns, 1996; Hitzhusen, 2012; Ellingson *et al.*, 2012; Smith and Pulver, 2009). Each ethic connects shared denominational values to environmentalism (Kearns, 1996). For example, Evangelical ‘Creation Care’ uses the Biblically based Christian Stewardship ethic to ‘care for creation’ to motivate sustainable behaviour in conservative Christians (Johnston, 2013; Veldman *et al.*, 2014; Gottlieb, 2006). Christian and non-Christian faith communities in Canada blend eco-theology ethics to comprise a set of interconnected worldviews that connect to environmental issues (Moyer & Scharper, 2019), allowing them to facilitate a unique point of connection or encounter between themselves and sustainable behaviour. Eco-theology shows that connections are being made between faith and sustainability.

Faith communities also engage large audiences, deploy institutional and economic resources, and provide platforms for connectivity (Veldman *et al.*, 2014; Haluza-DeLay, 2014; Jurdi *et al.*, 2017; Bomberg & Hague, 2018). Thus, faith communities have a strong set of resources at their disposal, and a heightened ability to communicate their message. Learning by communication involves reaching a consensus or shared understanding of belief (Billings and Samson, 2012; Mezirow, 1997), which encourages organized action and identity construction (Billings and Samson, 2012). Faith communities connect people to shared values and communicate shared values to connect people (Ellingson *et al.*, 2012; Tsimpo & Wodon, 2016).

Although faith communities (FC) have potential to shift beliefs and increase participation in sustainable activities, research is still lacking (Johnston, 2013; Jurdi *et al.*, 2017; Morrison *et al.*, 2015; Ives & Kidwell, 2019). There are many questions and minimal evidence available to confirm any long-term environmental change and contributions to sustainability by these communities (Moyer, 2013; Smith and Pulver, 2009). While there has been a range of studies conducted in the United States, there has been minimal research on Faith Communities and environmental sustainability in Canada.

1.2 Purpose statement

This research sought to expand on current research on faith communities in Canada at the congregational level and their activities regarding sustainability. The purpose of this research was to determine the role of faith communities at the congregational level in their members' sustainability learning and action, and to understand relationships among faith, learning and sustainability embedded within related sustainability activity.

1.3 Objectives

I set four objectives to strategically address this purpose.

1. To explore available sustainability activity and opportunities for learning within faith communities;
2. To examine sustainability learning outcomes of faith community members and the resulting individual and collective actions that occur;
3. To consider the role of the faith in individual learning for sustainability, with particular attention to connections between faith and sustainability values; and,

4. To develop a framework describing the relationships among faith, learning, and sustainability social action across selected faith communities in Canada.

These objectives will be approached through the proposed methods outlined below and in Chapter 3.

1.4 Research Methods

The research for this project was completed in two phases. Phase one focused on reviewing acquired information on faith communities in Canada undertaken by other team members. For this project, a research team collaborated to assist in logistics, and gather information for Phase 1. This research team consisted of my thesis advisor, Dr. A John Sinclair, and Dr. Joanne Moyer with her research assistants, Kathryn Binnema and Claire Brandenbarg, at The King's University. Dr. Sinclair and Dr. Moyer assisted with the overall logistics of the project. Dr. Moyer and her researcher assistant provided base-line information for Phase 1 of my study by conducting web searches to consolidate a list of faith institutions in Canada, including Christian and others, and to identify the sustainability activities of each institution. FCs were identified using census data, sociological works on religion in Canada, and interfaith organizations. Web searches of the identified FCs were conducted to determine the sustainability activities of each institution. I assisted with Phase 1 by reviewing the information collected on FCs, supplementing where necessary, and adding to the list. Dr. Moyer then conducted phone interviews with employees or volunteers from 17 faith communities and their leadership organizations to expand on the information about each institution we collected through the web searches. Information collected for Phase one of my study provided a general overview of faith community groups in Canada, and provided a base for my detailed case study selection (as described in Chapter 3).

Phase two of my research was focused on the congregational level of the FCs identified in Phase one. Using the information found in Phase one paired with further web searches and document review, a subset of congregations was chosen based in part on them having active environmental engagement. As described in Chapter 3, two cases were selected, and qualitative questionnaires were administered to congregation members followed by semi-structured interviews with active community members.

1.5 Contributions to Knowledge

Assessing sustainability activity, learning and action outcomes, and connections to faith provided an important Canadian context as to how faith communities are engaging in environmental sustainability. This research also contributes to the adult learning literature, particularly to the relationships between learning and social action. Sustainability engagement has been well-documented in the United States and other countries (Taylor *et al.*, 2016; Gottlieb, 2006), however, information and research is lacking in Canada. My research therefore adds to the existing body of knowledge and contributes to framing future research.

1.6 Organization of the Thesis

Following this introductory chapter, I provide a review of the literature related to faith communities, learning theory and sustainability in Chapter 2. Following this, the approach that I used to carry out the data collection and analysis is provided. In Chapter 4 I provide case study profiles of each selected case study, and document sustainability activity. Chapter 5 focuses on connections between faith and sustainability. In Chapter 6, I document learning opportunities, outcomes and social action. In the final concluding chapter, I reflect on my objectives and the conclusions that can be drawn from the data.

CHAPTER 2: SUSTAINABILITY, FAITH COMMUNITIES AND LEARNING

2.1 Introduction

The global environmental crisis is growing due to wicked problems such as climate change, ecological degradation, and other environmental issues, and supported sustainability projects and initiatives can provide valuable insight into possible solutions. Wicked problems are described as problems that are difficult to define, and difficult to solve (Rittel and Webber, 1973; Armitage *et al.*, 2015). A shift in perspective is needed for more people to engage with more sustainable projects, behaviours, or advocacy in order to create sustainable solutions (Grim, 2013; Veldman *et al.*, 2014; Johnston, 2013; Ellingson *et al.*, 2012; Moyer, 2015; Lee and Kong, 2015). Faith communities can potentially provide the resources necessary to help facilitate environmental engagement (Grim, 2013; Veldman *et al.*, 2014; Johnston, 2013; Ellingson *et al.*, 2012; Moyer, 2015; Lee and Kong, 2015; Jurdi *et al.*, 2017; Bomberg & Hague, 2018). As discussed in Chapter 1, faith communities engage large audiences, deploy institutional and economic resources, and provide platforms for connectivity (Veldman *et al.*, 2014; Haluza-DeLay, 2014; Jurdi *et al.*, 2017; Bomberg & Hague, 2018). Faith communities have a strong presence in countries around the globe, including Canada, and sometimes partner with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). International NGOs have dedicated many resources to sustainability projects in different countries, and many have been successful – including among faith-based groups.

This literature review first introduces the concept of sustainability. Sustainability is a word used often and across many disciplines. Sustainability is central to my research, so it is important to provide an overview of the use of the word in the context I will use it. A brief overview of sustainability in Canada follows the sustainability definition section to provide

context. This is followed by a section that focuses on transformative learning theory (TLT). A short description of the relevance of faith communities and sustainability follows. TLT will be used as a lens to consider the learning outcomes of the action of individuals engaged in faith-based sustainability activities. An advocacy/engagement section discusses what sustainability action looks like. Finally, the role of NGOs in Canada will be discussed to outline the sorts of actions NGOs do to facilitate advocacy for sustainability.

2.2 What is Sustainability?

Sustainability has become ubiquitous when talking about anything related to environmental conservation, protection, or any other form of advocacy and awareness. The United Nation's Brundtland Commission created the first official definition of sustainable development in 1987 (Brundtland). According to the *Our Common Future* report created by the Brundtland Commission, sustainable development is, "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland, 1987, p. 41). Implementation of sustainable development projects and processes has grown and evolved since the Brundtland Commission. However, there have been more advancements in development than in sustainability (Duic *et al.*, 2015).

The definition formed by the Brundtland Commission was the result of years of environmental issues and disasters, social movements, and educators coming to the forefront. In other words, it was the result of need. For example, Rachel Carson was an important influence with her well-known book *Silent Spring* (Carson, 2002), which fuelled the modern environmental movement. Carson spotlighted negative impacts of human activity on the environment, displaying a need for change (MacDowell, 2012). Early influences and activists of the environmental movement, such as Carson, provided impetus for the creation of many

environmental organizations. For example, the Canadian-born organization Greenpeace started as a small group of people supporting the environmental movement and grew into an international organization that focuses on linking peace movements and environmental issues (MacDowell, 2012). Since Brundtland, the definition of sustainable development has been shaped by growing concern and awareness of environmental issues, and communities continue to contribute to implementing the definition (Hanna and Slocombe, 2007).

Sustainability is now commonly broken down into three elements, or pillars: environmental, social, and economic sustainability (Hansmann *et al.*, 2012). The three pillars represent the interconnectivity in sustainability. In the typical visual of the three pillars, the pillars support sustainability. If one pillar is removed, sustainability is not achieved. Therefore, the three pillars must be considered in development (Hansmann, *et al.*, 2012). In some cases, considering all three pillars is not enough. Some decision makers add more elements to assure the needs of the present and the future of a particular community are recognized (Hanna and Slocombe, 2007). Recently, the report *Building Common Ground* suggests that in the context of environmental assessment, sustainability should include five pillars: environment, economic, social, culture, and health (Gélinas *et al.*, 2017). While this expression of sustainability is relatively new, it acknowledges other aspects that often need greater attention from a community orientation to achieve sustainability. As research persists and new information surfaces, adaptability may be an important factor in achieving sustainability in the future.

Collections of literature acknowledge the three pillars as the key to sustainable development, other collections acknowledge the need to expand the pillars, while some indicate that issues like health are captured within the three pillars. To embody adaptability in conjunction with continual sustainability research, I propose the following definition of

sustainability: Sustainability – (1) acknowledges the implications and interconnections of environmental, social and economic issues within society, (2) attempts to continually understand the conflicts and relationships between the issues, and (3) seeks to improve these issues within the present and for the future (Hanna and Slocombe, 2007; Hessing *et al.*, 2005). Thus, environmental, social and economic issues must be acknowledged, understood, and improved.

2.3 The State of Sustainability in Canada

Canada's economy is still reliant on natural resources, so exploiting the environment continues to be central to trade and economy in Canada as driven by the global demand for products (Mitchell, 2015). The collapse of the cod fisheries in Newfoundland is a well-known example of management of natural resources that was not sustainable. Among other factors, fragmentation and lack of communication, focus on economic growth, and uneven development contribute to poor management or failures to achieve sustainability and environmental conservation (Mitchell, 2015; Hanna and Slocombe, 2007). To further complicate progress, discrepancies between federal and provincial governments in Canada complicate jurisdiction, environmental laws, policies, and protocols (Hanna and Slocombe, 2007). To properly manage natural resources and attain sustainability, there must be cooperation over many levels (Hanna and Slocombe, 2007).

Although success regarding the incorporation of sustainability has been very uneven in Canada, there have been many success stories. The federal government created the Canadian Coalition for Acid Rain in the 1980s and succeeded in reducing emissions that were causing the rain (MacDowell, 2012). The Banff-Bow Valley study, which established a wildlife corridor and practiced multiple-use park management, and the United States-Canada Transboundary Water Management, which implemented transboundary management, are also examples of success

stories in Canada at the time of their implementation (Mitchell, 2015). As well, in 1990, the Canadian Federal government was a global leader supporting sustainable development when they implemented the Green Plan, until it failed to reach the goals set (MacDowell, 2012). Federal action on sustainability also influenced the provincial and territorial governments, some passing sustainable development acts, but these too fell short when it came to implementation (Sinclair and Quinn, 2012). Some resulting government-initiated programs and projects have been successful at promoting and implementing sustainability, but most have fallen well short on encouraging the changes in behaviour needed to have the sorts of long-term implications needed. This shows the need, more than ever, to understand sustainability learning across active groups that contribute to sustainability action within Canada.

2.4 Faith, Religion and Community

My thesis specifically discusses faith communities versus religious communities. Because of this, I aim here to differentiate between ‘faith’ and ‘religion’. In the literature, authors and academics write about how faith is difficult, if not impossible, to define. Smith (1979) states that, “great religious minds have regularly affirmed that faith cannot be precisely delineated or verbalised; that it is something too profound, too personal, and too divine for public exposition” (p. 170). While faith is highly personal (Smith, 1979) and interpretations and discussion of faith is also highly variably, I will provide a definition of both faith and religion in order to frame data in later chapters.

Haluza-DeLay (2014) defines religion as including, “beliefs, worldviews, practices, and institutions that cross borders, time and scale from the level of individuals all the way to transnational and transhistorical movements” (p. 261). Broken down further, religion is also composed of a common tradition and personal faith (Smith, 1979). Personal faith is a way of

knowing that involves an alignment of the heart and a commitment of trust (Fowler, 1981), that is part of an individual's inherent trust that shapes their views in life (Smith, 2003). Religious faith integrates cognitive dimensions, such as Biblical knowledge or a set of principles, with personal dimensions, such as trust and commitment (Creamer, 1996). When I refer to faith in this thesis, I refer to personal faith in connection with the religious principles of the faith community.

A faith community is a local community of people who share similar faith under a religion, such as Christianity or Hinduism, and worship together. A faith institution or faith-based organization differs from a faith community. A faith institution is the organization of the particular faith, such as the Catholic hierarchal structure. A faith-based organization is an organization based in a specific faith that usually has a set of tasks and goals that the organization works towards. For example, A Rocha is a Christian faith-based organization that works on conservation and environmental stewardship projects. According to Smith (1979), groups such as, "The Christian Church, the Muslim ummah, the Hindu caste, the Buddhist Sangha and much more are in primary part of the expression of the personal faith of the men and women who constitute and have constituted these groupings" (p. 175). These groups represent the larger, global faith community. In the context of this research, a 'faith community' is a much smaller localized community that is considered a subset under these larger organizations. Faith provides a shared meaning for individuals (Fowler, 1981), which is reflected in faith communities. For example, a faith community can be a local church, mosque, or temple. A faith community is an expression of its members (Smith, 1979), which leads to diverse activity across various areas.

2.4.1 Catholic Faith

Catholicism falls under the umbrella of Christianity and follows the tradition of belief in God (Langan, 1998). Catholicism is a trinitarian religion, meaning that God is the Holy Trinity of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit (White, 2017). The Catholic tradition focuses on the Word of God, which is embodied in Jesus Christ in living form and in the Church and serves as a living example of what Catholics are expected to be (Langan, 1998). The Christian experiences this relationship with God, “at its best, as a genuine love, an interpersonal, concrete reciprocal action, in which the Father’s love flows to him through the Holy Spirit of the Risen Christ via the living social reality of His mystical Body, the Church” (Langan, 1998, pg. 31). The Church represents established traditions and the teachings of the Church (Langan, 1998).

The structure of the Catholic Church is as follows: Papacy, the Bishops, then the Parishes (Langan, 1998). The Papacy is the head of the Catholic Church and functions as, “ultimate guarantor of unity and wholeness” (Langan, 1998, pg. 413). The Bishop is the leader within a diocese, or district (Langan, 1998), with an archdiocese being a larger district, such as a metropolitan area. A Parish is the “local territorial community” where the “average Catholic meets His Church” (Langan, 1998, pg. 418). A Pastor is the leader within a Parish who must, “carry out enthusiastically the actual work of the parish in its every activity, from the central life factor, the liturgy and prayer groups, through all the organized works of mercy, to the most mundane tasks of management and repair that must be carried out” (Langan, 1998, pg. 419). This hierarchical structure gives authority at various levels and allows leadership to govern their respective local, regional or global bodies.

2.4.1.2 Catholic Social Teaching and Laudato Si

The Catholic Church offers teachings and guidance, particularly spiritual guidance and rituals given with the Word of God (Langan, 1998). The Catholic Church has a Magisterium, which are the teaching offices of the Church that are communicated through the Pope and through all Bishops in communion with the Papacy (McFarland *et al.*, 2011; Melé, 2011). The Magisterium is considered a ‘teaching authority’ that consists of what is officially taught in the Catholic Church (Coulter *et al.*, 2007). The Magisterium has developed teachings on how a Christian should act in social life called Catholic Social Teaching (CST) which are found in Encyclicals of the Popes (Dyrness & Kärkkäinen, 2008; Melé, 2011). An Encyclical under CST is a letter or document that discusses social policy and justice (Barry, 2005; Melé, 2011). Catholic Social Teaching consists of, “the world of thought and the world of action. The world of thought introduces us to ideas, values and principles that can guide our choices in public and private. The world of action demands that these principles be translated practically into our lives” (Tuohy SJ, 2005, p. 113). While there is some debate on the number of core principles of CST, they typically are listed as human dignity, the social nature of the human, the common good, subsidiarity, solidarity, the preferential option for the poor, and theories of justice (Dyrness & Kärkkäinen, 2008).

The latest CST is from Pope Francis (2015) in *Laudato Si’ Encyclical Letter of the Holy Father Francis on Care for our Common Home*. This Encyclical is the first strongly focused on environmental sustainability (Li *et al.*, 2016; O’Brien & Shannon, 2016), and acknowledges the scientific evidence supporting climate change and the risk populations in poverty face from a changing climate (Li *et al.*, 2016). Central topics in *Laudato Si* are: science-based support for climate change and environmental degradation that warrant human concern, human causes of the current environmental crisis, a revised theology of care for creation, and recommendations to

move forward (Christie *et al.*, 2019). *Laudato Si* discusses the current environmental crisis and its effects on both the planet and people.

‘Care for Our Common Home’ is central in *Laudato Si*, as suggested by the title. Francis (2015) writes, “Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us” (pg. 3). In describing ‘Our Common Home’, Francis (2015) acknowledges the relationship between humans and the earth. Francis (2015) also points out how humans have harmed this relationship:

This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she “groans in travail” (Rom 8:22). We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (cf. Gen 2:7); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters (pg. 3-4)

To rectify the harm done to the earth Francis (2015) proposes the idea of an integral ecology in *Laudato Si* that includes a more integrated approach to the relationship between humans and the earth. Pope Francis (2015) notes:

everything is closely interrelated, and today’s problems call for a vision capable of taking into account every aspect of the global crisis, I suggest that we now consider some elements of an integral ecology, one which clearly respects its human and social dimensions (pg. 103).

This calls for a more integrated approach to consider all aspects of ‘our common home’. Integral ecology is a, “new vision of CST incorporating ecological concern and a revised theology of care for creation into the established accounts of the common good, solidarity, human dignity, subsidiarity, and the priority of concern for the poor (Christie *et al.*, 2019, pg. 7).

While Francis (2015) calls for ‘Care of Our Common Home’ focusing on an integrated approach, and touches on topics such as global poverty, pollution, and employment, the main message discussed by the public or academics from *Laudato Si* centers around the environmental crisis, or climate change (e.g. Kidwell *et al.*, 2018; Li *et al.*, 2016). In part, this is because this Encyclical is particularly noteworthy since it reframes Biblical interpretations of dominion of the earth to stewardship (Kidwell *et al.*, 2018; Christie *et al.*, 2019; O’Brien & Shannon, 2016). This shows the Pope, the head of the Catholic Church, supports the environmental movement, and provides linkages between Catholicism and sustainability. Biblical language and interpretations of that language has been an issue for the environmental movement in the past. In other words, the Encyclical takes a modern perspective and interpretation of Biblical teachings and provides followers with a framework for thinking about and approaching environmental issues.

2.4.2 Unitarian Universalist Faith

Prior to this study, I was not aware of the Unitarian Universalist (UU) community or faith. When I started researching possible case studies, I quickly became aware of Unitarian Universalists. The UU faith is interesting, and quite different from the other faith communities I had come across. UUism is grounded in the principle of a contract where members share a set of seven principles and are connected through values. While there is not requirement to believe in God, the UU understanding of the divine is the belief of God as one, a unity that will grant universal salvation to all people (Bailey, 2013; Hostler, 1981; McKanan, 2012). According to McNatt, “Unitarian Universalism is a non-creedal faith. Rather than a common theology, we are bound by our common history, our affirmation of each person’s spiritual quest, and the promises we make to one another about the spiritual values we uphold.” (2012, pg. 4). It is more important in UUism to be connected by a common set of values that guide individuals through life.

It is required that individuals that join UUism uphold their seven principles. The seven principles are:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
2. Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and
7. Respect for the inter-dependent web of all existence of which we are part (Brandenburg, 2007; Morales, 2012)

The 7th principle, the respect for the interdependent web of all existence, is considered the ‘sustainability’ principle, which gives room for congregation members to consider the environment when thinking about their actions. This principle acknowledges the connection of all things, and thus promotes UUs to recognize how their actions impact the environment. The seventh principle pushes UU members to think beyond themselves as individuals, and consider the larger group and how their individual choices and actions impact the greater system we are all part of (Gilmore, 2007).

Unitarian Universalism as an institution is represented by the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) in Canada, with other similar organizations internationally. The purpose of the national organization is to promote Unitarian Universalism by supporting, nurturing, and providing various aspects of Unitarianism to its members and to national and international communities (CUC, 2019). The CUC consists of an Executive Director, Board of Trustees, various employees and partners, and member congregations, and the CUC itself is accountable to the member congregations (CUC, 2019). Within a Unitarian Universalist church, the Minister is the spiritual leader, and a set of staff and volunteers organize logistics and activity within the church.

2.5 Faith communities and sustainability

Faith communities can potentially facilitate sustainability engagement due to their unique set of resources. To reiterate, FCs can potentially influence worldviews, engage large audiences, provide space for communication and connectivity, and use institutional and economic resources to build programs and connect people (Veldman *et al.*, 2014; Haluza-DeLay, 2014; Jurdi *et al.*, 2017; Bomberg & Hague, 2018). Leadership within FCs regularly communicate messages to FC members, thus holding the ability to influence sustainability attitudes (Koehresena, 2018; Tsimpo & Wodon, 2016). According to Kidwell *et al.* (2018), FCs that are practicing sustainability become active either through committed leadership, a group of FC members, or top-down through existing organizations.

FCs are interesting when connecting people to sustainability action because they typically use spiritual messages versus secular groups that use messages of planet degradation (Bomberg & Hague, 2018). ‘Creation care’ is a great example of why FCs are particularly interesting and useful in connecting people with sustainability action. This kind of faith-based message provides a different narrative than secular groups to connect to sustainability (Bomberg & Hague, 2018). ‘Creation care’ is the Christian concept that humans have a responsibility to ‘care for creation’ (Johnston, 2013), which stems from a ‘Biblical mandate’ where humans are stewards of the earth who must care for God’s creation (Kearns, 1996; Ellingson *et al.*, 2012). In the case of ‘Creation Care’, motivations for engaging in sustainability are rooted in Biblical interpretations and faith (Johnston, 2013). Faith communities engage an audience of FC members that might not otherwise be exposed to sustainability practices (Bomberg & Hague, 2018), and Creation Care provides potentially stronger motivations to engage with sustainability for these members. Strong resources earlier discussed also gives FCs opportunities to communicate messages of ‘Creation

Care', which could involve more individuals and inspire action. A blend of unique sustainability motivators and access to solid resources makes FCs who follow Creation Care influential.

Different FCs will engage or not engage with sustainability based on different motivations. However, FCs are interesting in regard to sustainability because they have strong potential to engage with the environment, and understanding what motivates engagement and what facilitates the step towards sustainability is fascinating, influential and understudied.

2.6 Learning for Sustainability

Learning presents possibilities to bridge the gap between environmental problems and environmental solutions (Ball, 1999), and expand current ideas and thinking on sustainability (Hanna and Slocombe, 2007). Shifting perspectives to include more integrated concepts of sustainability can engage communities and mitigate human caused environmental degradation (Moore, 2005; Ball, 1999; Mitchell, 2015; Hanna and Slocombe, 2007). Sustainability education attempts to link people to the values of sustainability (Moore, 2005). Learning is in fact viewed by many (e.g., Finger and Verlaan, 1995) to be essential to action on sustainability – “learning our way out” as Finger and Verlaan (1995) suggests, potentially breaks the typical cycle of short term fixes by learning to live sustainably within earth’s limits through connections between local and global, and biophysical and sociopolitical.

Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) offers a promising theoretical frame for understanding learning that promotes the types of individual and social change necessary for action on sustainability, since the theory is about adult learning that produces far-reaching change in learners as they evaluate and refine their perceptions, ideas, worldviews, and meanings via critical reflection and rational discourse (Mezirow 1981; 1991; 1998; Moyer *et al.* 2014;

Nohl, 2015). Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) is a lens through which to recognize and reveal transformative learning experiences that connect individuals to sustainability values (Ball, 1999). Transformative learning is the process of achieving change in an individual's set of perspectives or worldview (Mezirow, 1997; Moore, 2005; Cranton, 1996; Kitchenham, 2008; Diduck *et al.*, 2012), thus becoming critically aware of one's own assumptions by making and re-evaluating meaning in experiences (Kitchenham, 2008; Moyer and Sinclair, 2016).

Transformation occurs when assumptions and values are reassessed (Ball, 1999).

The set of values and assumptions constructed by cultural and parental influence make up an individual's frame of reference. This body of experience (Mezirow, 1997) includes habits of mind and points of view. Habits of mind are "broad and habitual", or the "set of codes" that individuals follow (Mezirow, 1997; Moore, 2005). Point of view is the articulation of habits of mind, or the way an individual interprets the world (Mezirow, 1997; Moore, 2005).

TLT proposes that autonomous thinking that can result in modifications to habits of mind can be achieved through the critical reflection on an individual's frame of reference (Mezirow, 1997). Learning mechanisms of critical self reflection and rational discourse help to facilitate autonomy and transformation (Cranton, 1996; Moyer and Sinclair, 2016). Such reflection involves assessing and critiquing assumptions and worldviews while consciously addressing personal value systems (Kitchenham, 2008). Discourse is communication through which dialogue is opened to assess, discuss, and analyze an individual's interpretations (Mezirow, 1997). The result of critical reflection and discourse can be transformation (Diduck *et al.*, 2012). Embodied learning as a mechanism is a recent addition to literature that focuses on doing and experiencing. "Embodied" refers to an experience that links the body and senses to other agents requiring 'hands on' engagement (Moyer *et al.*, 2014). Embodied processes can connect learning

processes through action, or an embodied experience (Moyer *et al.*, 2014), and therefore hands-on experiences are emphasized. Learning platforms, or learning opportunities, can create an opportunity for an individual to engage in discussion, hands-on application, and examine different perspectives, in turn potentially leading to a learning outcome (Diduck *et al.*, 2012).

Learning domains, or learning outcomes, have evolved as TLT has evolved. Mezirow adapted philosopher Jürgen Habermas's work to identify instrumental, dialogic, and self-reflective learning (Kitchenham, 2008). Current literature has instrumental learning, communicative learning, and transformative learning as learning domains (Mezirow, 1997; Diduck *et al.*, 2012; Moyer and Sinclair, 2016). Most literature focuses on instrumental learning and communicative learning as the two main learning domains for TLT. Learning can occur through the different learning processes.

Instrumental learning outcomes are varied and often listed in literature. Knowledge, skills and cognitive understandings (Quinn & Sinclair, 2016) and technological knowledge, legal and administrative knowledge, risks and impacts, and ecological knowledge (Diduck *et al.*, 2012; Moyer *et al.*, 2014) are just a few examples of learning outcome categories. Instrumental learning is often task oriented and involves working with and manipulating the environment (Mezirow, 1997; Diduck *et al.*, 2012; Moyer and Sinclair, 2016). Learning outcomes are the result of 'doing and experiencing' (Moyer *et al.*, 2014). Ultimately, problem solving through 'doing and experiencing' can result in many different types of knowledge that deal with control of events and environment (Moyer and Sinclair, 2016).

Communicative learning outcomes are accomplished through understanding meaning through communication (Mezirow, 1997; Diduck *et al.*, 2012; Moyer & Sinclair, 2016).

Language is the most important tool in communicative learning, as learning outcomes involve

understanding meaning through language, expression of thoughts and beliefs, and the ability to deal with conflict (Moyer *et al.*, 2014). This translates to insights into personal values, values of others, and shared values (Diduck *et al.*, 2012).

Transformative learning can occur when instrumental and communicative learning outcomes result in changes in one's meaning perspective resulting in a profound change (Moyer *et al.*, 2014). Using critical reflection and discourse in these learning processes potentially lead to transformation in thought and action (Moyer *et al.*, 2014). Linking problems with personal experience connects people to issues, and real learning experiences make meaning through perspective shifts (Ball, 1999). Therefore, TLT in adult education can present effective engagement opportunities.

A number of students that have preceded me considered TLT/sustainability nexus in their research work. Some of the outcomes of this research is reflected in literature referenced, but it is worth noting here some of the thesis work that has helped to frame my work. Joanne Moyer exemplifies effective engagement through TLT in her PhD thesis on learning and sustainability in Kenya. She writes of many incidences of learning opportunities resulting in transformation and engagement. For example, learning opportunities from A Rocha Kenya (ARK) and the Rural Service Programme (RSP) presented agricultural skills to individuals (Moyer, 2013). Certain individuals who learned these skills then applied them at home, thus engaging in sustainable behaviours. Social action occurred from individuals learning about sustainability, then applying what they learned and leading by example. For example, family members would learn from following what the individual family member did, and then apply that learning themselves, thus resulting in the whole family collectively engaging in sustainable behaviour (Moyer, 2013). Collective action also has the potential to occur through learning opportunities. For example,

Moyer discussed training in a community to create energy efficient stoves. A participant helped in making over 100 stoves, then trained other community members, and in turn those community members collectively made stoves (Moyer, 2013). In a PhD thesis by Lisa Quinn on social action, learning and clothing sustainability participants that were actively involved in sustainable clothing noted learning events pushed them to make more sustainable clothing choices (Quinn, 2014). These examples show instances where individuals have learned something new through hands on experience or communication and applied that learning in different ways.

Sustainability programs within or linked with NGOs that are specifically designed for learning, such as programs on organic farming which involve individuals with hands on work and communication, can elicit more sustainable behaviour in individuals (Moyer and Sinclair, 2019). Thus, the application of learning can be an effective engagement opportunity. I use TLT as a lens to consider learning outcomes in my research.

2.7 Social Action, Advocacy, and Engagement

In the definition of social action I am using in this research, social action is broken into individual action, interpersonal action, and collective action. Social action is the application or sharing of something learned. Broken down, individual social action is one person applying something they learned, interpersonal social action is one person sharing information they learned with other people, and collective social action is a group of people applying what they learned together (Moyer *et al.*, 2016). Social action is important to consider paired with TLT because action can help affirm an individual's learning outcome, assist the learning process, and can contribute to transformation (Moyer *et al.*, 2016).

Advocacy is “arguing in support of a specific cause, policy, idea or value” (Cox, 2010, p.226). Arguing in support of a cause, idea or value is essentially acting on an individual

principle or belief. Policy is slightly different as it is commonly defined as, “a broad statement of purpose and process for addressing a particular social, economic, or environmental issue. The intent of the policy is implemented via policy instruments such as regulatory, economic, expenditure, and institutional” (Swanson and Bhadwal, 2009, p. 13). More effective environmental policy is needed to improve governance for sustainability (Hessing *et al.*, 2005). Effective policy should be adaptive, which means it should be able to effectively address unforeseen circumstances and conditions if needed (Swanson and Bhadwal, 2009). Being adaptive increases the strength of the policy and improves governance by allowing for the correction of misguided attempts at creating change (Swanson and Bhadwal, 2009). Advocacy questions and criticizes behaviour, policy, or values to improve a particular issue (Cox, 2010).

Environmentalists advocate for the environment, and argue in support of policies, ideas, and values that support strong sustainability. Environmental advocacy demands a voice for the environmental movement, particularly in relation to the development of laws and policies and decisions about development. This can be achieved in part by sharing information that might not be accessible, and having opportunities to influence policy and decision-making systems (Boardman, 1992). Sharing information with individuals attempts to create awareness for an issue. Advocacy groups form networks with other similar groups, which increases the ability to share information (VanNijnatten, 2016). Therefore, advocacy groups are continually trying to build and strengthen the environmental movement by involving more individuals and increasing the understanding of policy (VanNijnatten, 2016).

Advocacy can also be described as ‘put into action by people’. Campaigns voice the ‘specific cause, policy, idea or value’ that is concerning (Cox, 2010). Advocacy campaigns create a strategic course of action and try to build public demand for the environmental issue

(Cox, 2010). Environmental campaigns are run by environmental non-governmental groups, usually use non-institutional sources, and seek to change external conditions (Cox, 2010). For example, an environmental campaign might advocate for decreases in pollution. Environmental groups provide the needed resources to run an effective advocacy campaign.

2.8 The Role of Faith-Based NGOs in Canada

Non-government organizations (NGOs) are non-profit, non-governmental groups, organizations and institutions that represent different perspectives while supporting a certain interest (Mitchell, 2015). Essentially, NGOs communicate and draw attention to issues they represent, and connect people to issues in approachable and respectful ways (Hessing *et al.*, 2005; Johnston, 2013). There is a diverse list of international and national NGOs, some of which I have mentioned already, which focus on topics such as human rights, health, the environment and sustainability. NGOs take on the role of advocacy and engagement in trying to influence policy and engage the public through the resources they have available and strategies they employ.

Partnerships with people and groups are essential to NGOs for communicating a message (Johnston, 2013). Many NGOs have lists of members and collaborate with other groups to share their message and influence change. Many NGOs are environmental groups or identify that enhancing and protecting the environment and sustainability are the group's primary aim. NGOs that mainly support environmentalism and sustainability are identified as environmental non-government organizations (ENGOS). There are over 1800 ENGOS in Canada, each with access to a set of resources such as volunteers, labourers, and knowledge mobilizers that they use to advocate for the environment and sustainability (Diduck *et al.*, 2012; Hessing *et al.*, 2005).

ENGO's use a host of different communication strategies, such as lobbying, education, and protesting to relay their message, shift public perspectives, and influence environmental policy (Hessing *et al.*, 2005). Communication tends to focus on public or political institutions (Hessing *et al.*, 2005). Education campaigns target the public, while protests, lobbying and other politicized actions target political institutions (Hessing *et al.*, 2005). The public and the political also influence one another. Environmental groups can gain public support and use that support to lobby and pressure political agendas (Hessing *et al.*, 2005). Lobbying is then on behalf of public environmental interest. Putting environmental issues on the political agenda is important for influencing policy making (Hessing *et al.*, 2005).

Organized groups like ENGOs have support from the large following of the environmental movement and use communication strategies such as public mobilization and media campaigns to connect individuals to issues (VanNijnatten, 2016). However, ENGOs, like many NGO's, face issues with funding, organizational instability, and resources unable to rival government officials (Hessing *et al.*, 2005). Acknowledging strengths and weaknesses of NGOs and ENGOs allows for improvement and for groups to seek help to fill gaps.

Some NGOs partner with FCs on environmental projects. Faith communities have an added set of resources at their disposal and share a unique set of values that connect individuals, as noted in the introduction. Faith communities with strong sustainability programs and practices can provide insight into effective ways to engage individuals and in turn influence policy. While NGOs have faith partners, there are also faith groups engaging in environmental activities separate from NGOs. Examples of faith-based organizations (FBOs) engaging in environmental work are groups such as KAIROS, Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), and Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) (Moyer and Scharper, 2019).

There are numerous examples of the intersection of the work of faith and action on sustainability. In 1990, leading up to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, religious leaders were invited to join scientific leaders in the fight for environmentalism through an ‘An Open Letter to the Religious Community’ (Johnston, 2013). This invitation recognized a role for religion, and the importance of partnership with faith groups. FCs provide a global transmission of sustainability through networks, and quite often link sustainability with a sacred duty (Johnston, 2013). Interconnectedness stressed in many faith communities’ links with sustainable development definitions and practices, enforcing links between people, places, and all between the two.

NGOs act as mediators between possible different parties, providing motivation to behave a certain way (Johnson, 2013). The Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) is an NGO that works with different faith communities, connecting communities with environmental programmes (ARC, 2017). The Committee of Religious NGOs is a group of NGOs whose work is based in faith and have been active with the UN since it began (Johnston, 2013). Such faith-based NGOs are leaders in exemplifying the importance of interconnectivity, intervention, and value systems.

Another example of an FBO effectively using faith for environmental engagement are the Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN) and the Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies. These organizations have successfully used the platform ‘Creation Care’ to facilitate group action. The Au Sable Institute was designed to promote Creation Care, and the EEN was created to promote policy advocacy and encourage Evangelical participation (Johnston, 2011; Veldman *et al.*, 2014). Certain Evangelical groups have successfully formed environmental organizations because their religious narratives perpetuate the strong shared values of their followers (Veldman

et al., 2014). Evangelical ‘Creation Care’ groups wanted changes to public policies to follow Christian Stewardship by acknowledging the environmental crisis and providing protection from environmental degradation (Gottlieb, 2006, p. 84). Evangelical organizations use religious narratives to create large scale declarations of Creation Care to facilitate change (Johnston, 2013). The EEN developed the ‘Evangelical Declaration on the Care for Creation’, which declared Evangelical commitment to care for creation (Johnston, 2013). This demonstrates communicative action with an agreement of shared values. The declaration drew attention from influential academics and Evangelical leaders (Johnston, 2013). Evangelicals have a significant amount of power in the United States because they make up the largest religious group (Johnston, 2013). When this power is applied to environmental legislation, Evangelicals can contribute substantial influence (Johnston, 2013). Therefore, Evangelical organizations provide a powerful platform to communicate ‘Creation Care’ and influence Evangelical groups.

Although the EEN provides a great example of how Evangelicals are recognizing climate change and engaging in sustainability, it is also important to note the barriers and opposition such a Conservative group faces in advocating for the environment. Separation from nature and apocalyptic views are barriers to Conservative Christians recognizing climate change (Zaleha and Szasz, 2015). Separation from nature stems from early beliefs in Christianity that there is ‘one God’ instead of ‘many Gods’, which detached God from nature and gave dominion over creation (Zaleha and Szasz, 2015). Belief in an ‘inevitable apocalypse’ creates the perception that the current earth is not important (Zaleha and Szasz, 2015). These views opposing advocacy for the environment are difficult to tackle, especially with such a strong, loyal Evangelical following in the United States. Despite such challenges, it is important for successful groups

such as the EEN to continue their work in climate change and use their platform to communicate their message.

2.9 Summary

Sustainability is a prominent theme throughout environmental literature, with authors expressing the importance of sustainability for our and the planet's future, as well as the need for people to engage in sustainability behaviours. However, it is also common in the literature to discuss the need for a fundamental shift in our individual and collective perspectives to achieve the level of engagement needed to make strides towards a more sustainable society. "Learning our way out" (Finger and Verlaan, 1995), underscores this notion and proposes learning as fundamental to shifting perspectives and engaging individuals in sustainability-oriented behaviours. Learning can link people to sustainability values, and as discussed, TLT provides a lens to understand adult learning as action on sustainability. When individuals change their perspectives and meaning schemes through critical reflection and rational discourse, transformation can occur. Social action then plays an important role, as individuals who have shifted their perspective and engage in sustainable behaviour advocate for the environment by communicating information to more individuals, or just by doing.

In some cases, NGOs facilitate learning and environmental advocacy for sustainability. ENGOs share some similarities with environmentally active faith communities, through their resources, methods, and action. While there are NGOs with faith partners, there are also faith groups engaging in environmental activities that do not affiliate with an NGO. It is important to note that the primary purpose of the FC is spiritual work, not environmental. Therefore, the motivations to engage in sustainability work are spiritual. FCs are influential in their own right, and can use their unique influence and resources to promote environmental advocacy, learning

and sustainability more broadly. The work of FCs related to sustainability is mentioned throughout the literature, but minimal information is available on faith communities and their environmental/sustainability work in Canada.

The focus of this research is on congregations that are engaged in sustainability activities, and questions if the activities present opportunities for learning. I use TLT as a lens to organize and to analyse learning opportunities within FCs, and if the opportunities lead to transformation towards sustainability behaviour. With such potential to increase environmental awareness and engagement, it is important to delve deeper into FCs in Canada and what is going on in successful groups to engage individuals to act sustainably.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Worldview

Philosophical worldviews are beliefs and perspectives a researcher holds that guide research through personal perspectives/approaches held (Creswell, 2014). The nature of the research I undertook, and my personal beliefs aligned best with the constructivist worldview. The constructivist worldview focuses on creating meaning through experiences (Creswell, 2014). Individuals apply personal social and historical norms to understand an experience, and thus create personal meaning through an experience (Creswell, 2014). Interactions between individuals are important in this context, as norms are perpetuated through interactions, and meaning construction is highly social (Creswell, 2014). I find meaning construction very interesting, and I believe people are very much shaped by experiences – and that these experiences are at the foundation of learning. It is interesting to me how different individuals create meaning through the personal influences they experience and their background. In the context of this research, it intrigues me to consider how individuals in faith communities create meaning and action on sustainability through learning experiences.

The constructivist worldview also fits with the qualitative approach selected for this research. I selected a qualitative research design for this study because qualitative research seeks to understand how an individual or group views a problem or situation (Creswell, 2014), which best aligns with the purpose and objectives of this research. My research sought to understand participants' relationships among faith, learning and sustainability within their FCs, which requires understanding how and where participants find meaning in experiences. A quantitative approach is not sufficient to achieve this understanding in this context, as statistical measures do not yield the robust view and understanding that building rapport, engaging in discussion and

observation, and other qualitative data collection strategies provides. A qualitative research design provides the necessary tools required to approach the issues central to my research.

3.2 Strategy of Inquiry-Case Study

A strategy of inquiry is a research design that provides a framework for research (Creswell, 2009). The strategy used for my research was a case study. A case study occurs when, “the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals” as I am proposing (Creswell, 2014, p. 14). The in-depth analysis uses multiple methods to collect the needed evidence (Yin, 2009). For example, a research design could use interviews, observations, and surveys. Within the case, the context and phenomenon of interest are examined (Rosenberg and Yates, 2007). Importantly, analyzing a case allows the researcher to explore contextual phenomena in a real-life context (Yin, 2009; Rosenberg and Yates, 2007; Cronin, 2014).

The overall goal of a case study is to understand the connections between phenomenon and real-life situations based on data collection and analysis under the framework of a theory. The use of theory is what differentiates case studies from other similar strategies of inquiry (Yin, 2009). The cases I focused on are two faith communities in Canada. For my research, the learning that results from environmental engagement activities of faith communities were examined using a transformative learning theory lens.

Yin (2009) indicates that when completing the research design, it is also important to clarify the type of case study that best suits the research question. Yin (2009) suggests that a multiple case study design is preferred over a single case study as they allow for some direct replication. For my research, I considered two cases for detailed study in order that I might understand the

activities related to sustainability of more than one faith community. In phase 1 of the research, multiple faith-based institutions were considered to study the structure of environmental programs within the organization, and how that could affect the actions of people at a congregational level. For example, an organizing body like the Anglican Church of Canada created environmental statements and signed external environmental statements. A list of national level FCs identified are listed in Table 1. One question is whether these kinds of statements are resulting in action at the congregational level. This data collection on FC institutions was completed mostly by other members of the research team through internet searches and telephone interviews and contributed data to objectives 1 of the research.

Table 1 List of national level Canadian faith communities identified through preliminary data collection

List of FCs at the national level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anglican Church of Canada • Association of Progressive Muslims of Canada • Buddhist Council of Canada • Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops • Canadian Council of Churches • Canadian Unitarian Council • Christian and Missionary Alliance • Christian Reformed Church • Evangelical Fellowship of Canada • Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada • Green Churches Network • Hindu Federation of Canada • Mennonite Church Canada • National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada • Orthodox Church in America • Presbyterian Church of Canada • Sisters of St. Joseph • United Church of Canada • World Sikh Organization of Canada

Data collected from phase 1 was used to implement phase 2. Phase 2 focuses on the congregational level of faith communities. Phase 2 of the research focused on selected case faith communities. Faith communities were selected using the case study selection criteria and information provided from phase 1. Phase 2 expanded on phase 1 by conducting a qualitative questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to gain more in-depth data on the selected case study information found from phase 1. Phase 2 provided data to objectives 1 and 2, and contributed data to objectives 3 and 4.

3.3 Case Study Selection

The selection criteria identified in Table 2 was used to select two FCs for detailed study. Several faith institutions were identified during phase 1 of my research based on this document review and information collected through telephone interviews by Dr. Moyer. For example, the United Church of Canada, the Canadian Unitarian Council, and the Presbyterian Church of Canada, among others, were identified as active groups engaging in environmental/sustainability work.

From this, document review continued by searching for active congregations under the identified active faith institutions, and congregations that were suggested in the telephone interviews. To identify active congregations, I began with broad web searches, using keywords like ‘sustainable Mosque’, or ‘sustainable Catholic church’. Once this web search was exhausted, I moved on to search by province or territory, and then by major city. Document review remained similar, searching for FCs across Canada, reviewing each website for information on sustainability and the environment, and investigating if the community conducted sustainability engagement of any kind at the grassroots level or otherwise. Information found was documented for comparison. Case study selection was limited to FCs with an online presence and

sustainability information available on congregational websites. It was more difficult to find non-Christian active websites than it was to find Christian websites. Less information was available online on non-Christian websites, and it was more difficult to connect with a contact person. Recommendations also guided selection, as some contact persons provided more detailed information on environmental engagement in specific FCs.

Table 2 Case Study Selection Criteria

Selection Criteria	Reason
Leading examples in sustainability practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide strong sustainability practices/action to study
Communities with a large following and many members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to participants and groups
At least one Christian and one non-Christian community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand on current research based mostly on Christian groups • Consider replication • To cover/consider the range of FCs in Canada
Location selected based on which FCs have more sustainability activity, with at least one FC located in Winnipeg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility • Geographical location not important in this research
Have an online presence and/or be recommended/have info from contact person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of locating active congregations • Access to information
FC that is willing to participate in the research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to participants and information

A list of active local congregations across Canada were identified through the document review web searches and recommendation, as identified in Table 1. From this list, FCs were ranked as most environmentally active to least active based on the available online information, as identified in Table 2. Level of sustainability activity was based on the presence of a dedicated committee, sustainability programming or activities, and available resources for faith community members. FCs that had the most of this information available were considered the most environmentally active. Table 3 provides a long list of congregations considered for case study

selection. While forming this list, I also contacted FCs that mentioned sustainability work that could potentially be active but did not provide as much information on their website. FCs were contacted by contact information available on congregational websites.

Table 3 Long list of congregations considered

City	Faith	Congregation	Sustainability Activities
Toronto	Catholic (Passionist)	http://stgabrielsparish.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Church (theological purpose and engineering, LEED Certified) • 2015 forum on <i>Laudato Si</i> • Fair trade coffee, tea, and chocolate (sold 3rd Sunday of every month) • Youth group-some activities have included planting native trees in parks • Under homilies: Garden workshop, Hike and prayer seeing the beauty in all things
Halifax	United	http://www.standrewshfx.ca/our-green-covenant/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green covenant (makes an effort to reduce GHG and carbon footprint) • Social action committee: advocacy, social justice, climate change, environmental justice
Peterborough	United	http://greenwoodunit.ed.weebly.com/green-page.html	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green team, green tips and quotes • Beekeeping • Minimal information available on the website
Winnipeg	United	http://www.crescentfortrouge.ca/how-we-work/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Team (minimal info on website, but according to the email from Teresa Looy it is quite active)
*Waterloo	Presbyterian	http://knoxwaterloo.ca/home/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday Church Hall: Urban forestry challenges, • Minimal info on website
*Edmonton	Presbyterian	http://westmountpresbyterian.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal info on website
*Ontario		http://www.crieffhills.com/	(retreat centre)
*Vancouver	Anglican	http://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/diocesan-ministries/salaland-cedar , http://salalandcedar.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed discipleship movement • Sacred earth camp, 2-week environmental leadership program • Outdoor worship • Past events: walk and pray rice lake, nature kids Creekside exploration, cycle Stanley park seawall, faith commuter challenge, bike to worship week,

*Calgary	United	https://www.robertmccleurechurch.org/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers market • Community garden
*St-Jean-De Matha		https://www.abbayevalnotredame.ca/	(French)
*Saskatoon	Catholic	https://holyfamilycathedral.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal info on website
*Montreal	Catholic	https://www.saintfranciscpx.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community garden in the parking lot
*Cranbrook, BC	Orthodox	http://www.saintaidan.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted 'Healing Earth Conference'
*Summerland, BC	Evangelical	https://www.summerlandalliancechurch.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal info on website
Mississauga	Muslim	http://www.isna.ca/Default.aspx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website describes themselves as a community grass-roots organization • Recycling initiative, says website will be updated with more green info
London	Muslim	http://www.londonmosque.com/about-our-mosque/who-we-are.html	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of guiding principals is: Support Environmental and Financial Sustainability
Winnipeg	Muslim	http://www.winnipegmosque.org/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community garden • Under FAQs: "Is Islam a "green" religion? Yes..." • http://www.winnipegmosque.org/wcm-aims-be-environmentally-friendly
Outside Ottawa	Buddhist	https://tisarana.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest tradition
Winnipeg	Mennonite	http://www.charleswoodmennonite.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal info on website
Winnipeg	Mennonite	http://www.hopemennonite.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal info on website
Winnipeg	Anglican	http://www.stpetersanglican.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In their vision statements: embracing stewardship • Section on Creation Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommended readings, local food options, table prayers ○ Recycling ○ Links to MB eco network and others
Winnipeg	Jesuit Catholic	https://www.stignatus.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Goals-to promote education and awareness, promote reduce, reuse, recycle ○ Hosted events over the years

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Given grant to ‘Green Sacred Spaces’ ○ More: http://ignatius.parish.beta.lusciousorange.com/assets/content/Environment%20Committee.pdf
Winnipeg	Catholic (Indigenous)	http://kateri.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minimal info on website
Winnipeg	Anglican	http://www.saintmargarets.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minimal info on website
Halifax	Muslim	http://www.ummahmasjid.ca/index.php	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minimal info on website
Victoria	Muslim	http://crdcommunitygreenmap.ca/location/masjid-al-iman-mosque , http://org.thebcma.com/victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minimal info on website
Winnipeg	Unitarian	http://www.uuwinnipeg.mb.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Green action page <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resolution for the right to a healthy environment ● Other info <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compost bins, bike racks, LED lights, ○ Share the plate program ○ Workshops on climate change (adult education) ○ Some sermons on environmental themes ○ BEST program (in partnership with Green Action Committee) http://greenactioncentre.ca/module/asrts/best-program/ ○ Journey to a greener world sermon
Surrey	Sikh	http://www.gurunankgurdwara.ca/contact-us.html	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sikh Green Team
PEI	Buddhist	http://gebisociety.org/who-we-are/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vision: Environmental protection ● Conservation: Animal protection, tree plantation
*Suggestions/mentions from transcripts from Phase 1			

Once the list of the most active FC was complete, I continued to examine each possible case. I considered case study selection criteria, feasibility, and best fit. For example, if the top 2

potential cases were the same denomination, I would not choose both for case study selection to ensure diversity in faith of the cases studied. Communication and level of interest were also considered when selecting cases. The final strategy for selecting the cases was to contact the top potential cases to identify interest and to seek more information. If the potential case did not express interest or did not respond to further inquiries within a period of two weeks, I would move to contact the next potential case. Table 4 provides a short list of congregations considered.

Table 4 Short list of congregations considered

Case 1 considerations	Case 2 considerations
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. St. Ignatius Parish 2. Winnipeg United Crescent Fort Rouge 3. Winnipeg St. Peters Anglican 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Winnipeg Central Mosque/ Winnipeg Unitarian Universalist Church 2. London Mosque 3. PEI Buddhist 4. Vancouver Anglican Salal and Cedar 5. Halifax United 6. Surrey Gurdwara

In Table 4, I created two lists of potential case studies. Within the list of active FCs and potential case studies, several potential cases were found in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Other locations included London, Prince Edward Island, Surrey, Vancouver and Halifax. Cases were separated into two lists to attempt to consider both Christian and non-Christian FCs. I also had to weigh some selection criteria against one another. For example, Winnipeg Central Mosque was at the top of one of the lists for case selection, but Vancouver Anglican Salal and Cedar had more sustainability activity and information available on their website than Winnipeg Central Mosque. Winnipeg Central Mosque had both sustainability information on their website and fulfilled the non-Christian case study selection criteria, which is why it was listed ahead of Salal and Cedar.

Based on selection criteria, feasibility and best fit, I chose to select and list FCs in Winnipeg. This also allowed the pursuit of a third case study. I began with St. Ignatius Parish, Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg (UUCW), and the Winnipeg Central Mosque (WCM). Unfortunately, I ended with only two cases, St. Ignatius and the UUCW. I began field work for the WCM but was unable to finish due to lack of accessibility.

The location proximity of Winnipeg proved beneficial for contacts and collecting more information. Due to the nature and lack of research in Canada on sustainability in faith communities, geographical location did not impact my particular research. Since I am looking at sustainability and learning, the level of activity in a faith community is more important than the geographical location. The geographical location of Winnipeg also had some added benefits, such as the possibility of extending the research to add one more case for a more well-rounded image of activity, emitting minimal greenhouse gas emissions by travelling by foot, bike or bus instead of plane for field work, and the possibility of attending more congregational events due to less time restrictions.

3.4 Data Collection Strategies

A case study needs multiple sources or strategies to collect evidence (Yin, 2003). To achieve my objectives, I employed document collection and review, qualitative questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews for data collection as described in detail below. Document review consisted of reviewing websites and online information to collect data on FBCs in Canada. A qualitative questionnaire was provided to members of the two FBC congregations to gain a more detailed understanding of the sustainability work being done by each. Semi-structured interviews were then conducted with the most active members to gain in-depth discussions about sustainability practices in their community.

3.4.1 Document Collection and Review

The main purpose of document collection was to find data on the sustainability activities of FCs in Canada to determine which FCs are the more actively engaged. A list was created by the research team in Edmonton, who began the document review and data collection. I have added to this database by researching more FCs and searching for more detailed information on communities on the list through web searches. Each search would start with the community's website and expand from there. Contact information, sustainability resources, environmental statements, educational resources and activities, and affiliations and partnerships were searched for and documented. A file was created for each FC for reference. A list of national level FCs identified in this preliminary data collection is provided in Table 1. This list was used to find employees, volunteers, or advocates of the national level faith communities to contact for telephone interviews for Phase 1 of the research. Dr. Moyer of the research team conducted the telephone interviews with individuals who were willing or able to participate in order to expand on website information.

Document review was also utilized to find as much information on sustainability activities in congregations across Canada. An example of the sorts of information my document review revealed can be drawn from the Presbyterian Church of Canada. The review provided contact information, organization size, and congregation lists. The review also revealed internal environmental statements, external environmental statements signed by the institution, and that various sustainability activities such as climate change advocacy have been undertaken, and that there is also action at the local congregational level. For example, the Westmount Presbyterian Church in Edmonton collaborated with some social justice agencies to build a net zero energy housing complex. The housing complex has reduced heating energy by 50% through such

innovative technologies as a photovoltaic electricity array on the roof and a geothermal energy system (PCCWeb, 2017).

3.4.2 Qualitative Questionnaires

Questionnaires “pose standardized, formally structured questions to a group of individuals, often presumed to be a sample of the population” (Hay ed., 2005, p.147). Data from a well-designed questionnaire provides an image of what is going on in a community in relation to the specific research question (Hay ed., 2005). I used a short qualitative questionnaire with members of the case FC (congregations). The resulting data helped me to satisfy objectives 1 and 2 of my research proposal.

Questionnaires were administered to congregation members online through Survey Monkey. Questions focused on determining what kind of opportunities for learning about sustainability are available in the community, and what kind of action has been taken by members. The list of questions was developed with the aid of the literature on the work faith communities are doing. The questions are located in Appendix I. Participants were limited to the members of the FC of each case study. Each FC was made aware of the questionnaire by email, newsletter, handouts, word of mouth, and announcements. In addition to the online questionnaire link, hard copies were also available at each FC admin office for individuals who do not have access to the online version.

I received 37 responses to the qualitative questionnaire from St. Ignatius Parish and 26 responses from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg. I was happy with the number of responses from each case study and believe that they were representative of the population given the results of my more detailed data collection as outlined below. However, most of my

responses were positive and indicate members were directly linked to the congregation's sustainability activities, and I speculate that there were some opinions that were not represented in these responses. In other words, I suspect there may have been a response bias towards respondents being linked to the sustainability activities. Because I am focusing on how people learn about sustainability, and in this case how individuals in faith communities learn about sustainability, I did not feel this was a huge issue since I actually wanted to focus on people who felt they had taken some sustainability actions. In regard to the connections between faith and sustainability, the responses provided insights into that connection as well. Further responses explaining why some individuals might believe they are not connected would have provided a larger image of what is going on in these communities, if that is even the case. There is a range of literature that discusses barriers FC might have between faith and sustainability (ex, Lee & Kong, 2015), but some concrete examples in my thesis would have affirmed this literature.

Questionnaire responses, along with observation, helped me prepare for my semi-structured interviews by providing me with insight into what was going on in each FC. I had already drafted an interview guide, but the questionnaires helped by providing context and framing the interview. For example, by providing information on how active the congregation was in comparison to the information I gathered from online sources. Also, by the nature of case study research, it provided another form of data collection that validated my results.

3.4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are structured yet flexible (Dunn, 2005). The interviewer has a structured interview guide with predetermined questions, but has the flexibility to stray from those questions to elaborate if necessary, explore relevant topics the interviewee brings up that are not listed, and omit or move on from questions that are not working for the interviewee. The

setting of a semi-structured interview should be comfortable and conversational, but with some formality.

I used semi-structured interviews for my research and built questions off of the questionnaire data to flesh out data related to my key objectives on learning, action, and relationships to faith. Semi-structured interviews allowed me to formally interact with faith-community leaders and members, but with the conversational flexibility to adjust questions and probing as the interview progresses.

Objectives one, two and three were also used to create and organize the interview guide. The interview guide contained in Appendix II was also developed following literature review findings, the research purpose and objectives, and a review of past thesis interview guides. I pilot tested the interview schedule to ensure understanding of questions, that they were revealing the data I planned and that the interview took a reasonable period of time. I conducted 13 interviews for each case, for a total of 26 interviews. One participant withdrew from the study, leaving a final total of 25 interviews.

Participants were faith community leaders and faith community members and I recruited participants by volunteer or recommendation. In the qualitative questionnaires there was space to provide contact information if the questionnaire participant was interested in an interview. I contacted all interested, and scheduled interviews with whoever agreed to participate. I also recruited participants by recommendation by asking active congregation members to recommend other active or interested individuals, and scheduled interviews with those that were interested. I searched for the most environmentally active individuals in each faith community, and individuals within the faith community who would have the best knowledge as to who those individuals are. Interview locations were determined in consultation with interviewees. Locations

ranged from coffee shops, to participant's homes to their workplace. I discussed consent, confidentiality, approximate length of the interview, and the focus of my research with each interviewee.

Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained with each participant. Any time a participant was recommended, I kept the recommender anonymous, and the participant had the voluntary option of participating or not. I feel this ensured confidentiality of both parties and ensured there was no coercion on the part of the recommender. The recommender did not know whether I contacted and/or interviewed the recommended participant unless that participant chose to share that information of their own accord. In the case of a semi-structured interview, confidentiality and anonymity was discussed with each participant. All participants were aware of the nature of my research and had the option to disclose as much identifying information as they felt comfortable with. This also included asking permission to be recorded and discussing the participant's right to withdraw from the research. No one refused to be recorded, but one participant did withdraw from the research.

Interview lengths ranged from 30-90 minutes, with the average interview lasting approximately 45 minutes. Each interview was recorded using a digital voice recorder. Interviews were transcribed once the interview was complete. I practiced member checking by contacting the participant once I transcribed the interview to have them review the transcript and ensure they are satisfied with the steps taken to protect their confidentiality and anonymity.

3.4.4 Participant Observation

I carried out some minor participant observation for my study. This was not a primary form of data collection, but observations were important to understanding the day to day activity

of the FC, to understand how the FC was approaching sustainability activities, what information is used to design activities, if subject ‘experts’ are involved, and if faith is used to develop activities. I spent some time in the congregations or faith community centres and observed the space. I looked for such things as advertisements, posters, or other information posted that is available to community members. I observed some activities the faith community carried out, such as committee meetings and a documentary screening. I documented my observations by writing notes and collecting any available hand-out information.

3.4.5 Case Study Participants

The majority of case study participants were women, with 3 men out of 12 participants in St. Ignatius and 3 men out of 13 participants in UUCW, with the majority of all participants being retired. When observing the church by going to Mass or Sunday service, I saw that many FC members were older. This mimics the general aging of church populations. There were still families and young children at both locations, but it is mostly the aging population that were involved in planning activities or participating in committees in the faith communities. Also, a number people in my sample did describe themselves as well-educated and upper-middle class in terms of financial status.

I would like to note that any quotes, observations or other data were not provided by the Faith Community or higher institution, they were provided by individuals who attend the local Faith Community. Each participant provided their own personal opinions, experiences and statements, which are not a reflection of the opinions of the Faith Community.

3.5 Analysis

Once data collection was complete, data from qualitative questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and participant observation was organized and analyzed. I kept a journal while in the field to organize my thoughts, which assisted my analysis. First, I exported the questionnaire data from Survey Monkey to NVivo and sorted the information. I consolidated participants answers to compare responses. I sorted questions and their responses, and sorted answers into overall themes and categories. Generally, the easiest and most effective organization I found was consolidating all info for one question in one node. For example, question 1 was made into a node and labelled as such, and answers to that question were organized into sub-nodes under that node. This made it easy to organize and visualize the data.

Themes expected from faith literature are different faith categories and faith motivations (Johnston, 2013). For the questionnaires, most of the themes were grounded in the data. There were some general parent themes in relation to the activities the faith communities have undertaken (e.g., environmental education).

Second, I analyzed the semi-structured interviews. Each interview was transcribed and imported into NVivo, where I coded the data. Coding breaks down data into manageable themes (Dunn, 2005). I started with preliminary coding grounded in the literature. As I analyzed the data, themes and finer details emerged. I started with the larger themes from the literature of Transformative Learning Theory, faith and sustainability, and social action. I also added the theme church activity, which was grounded in the data. Under these larger themes, I also started with sub themes from the literature, such as instrumental, communicative, and transformative learning which is in relation to the learning data (Mezirow 1981; 1991; 1998; Moyer *et al.* 2014; Nohl 2015). Each larger theme was flushed out and broken down into multiple sub themes and

subcategories. As I went through the data, more themes emerged that were grounded in the data, such as different instrumental learning themes, personal connections to faith, and church dynamics. Some sub themes were grounded in the data, such as available sustainability educational activity under church activity. As I went through the data, more themes were flushed out and broken down into multiple sub themes and categories. For example, further detailed sustainability activities.

The themes from the semi-structured interview data were then compared to the questionnaire data, and my observations were analyzed in conjunction with the interview and questionnaire data. I looked to see if the data was supported, and if there were any gaps. Coding was designed to reflect the purpose and objectives of this research, which includes identifying sustainability activity, learning and action outcomes, the role of faith, and the relationships between all three. Coding reflected the literature and objectives, and themes grounded in the data emerged throughout analysis.

CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDY FAITH COMMUNITIES SUSTAINABILITY PROFILES

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the two case study FCs that were the focus of my research, including a brief history, an outline of sustainability activities or programs, and general information about the faith of the faith community. These case study overviews provide context for the following chapters. Data presented here was compiled from online sources, participant interviews, and observation.

4.2 Case study: St Ignatius Parish

St. Ignatius Parish is a Jesuit Roman Catholic Parish centrally located in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. This Parish was founded in 1908 and has been at its current location since 1929 (St. Ignatius Parish, 2019). For an in-depth history of the progression of St. Ignatius Parish refer to the St. Ignatius website (www.stignatius.ca). The Parish is very active with over 20 different ministries including Development and Peace, the Environmental Committee, and the Refugee Committee. Sunday School is available for children of all ages until Grade 8, and an Adult Education Centre is attached to the Parish building where groups meet, and events and programs are hosted. St. Ignatius is also home to St Ignatius School, which includes nursery school to Grade 8. Mass is held every day of the week for a total of 13 a week. Out of the 13, 12 Masses are in English and one is in Spanish. Sunday is the busiest day, with three English Masses and one Spanish Mass. Coffee Time, which is organized by the Coffee Ministry, is held after the 9:30 am and 11:00 am Masses on Sundays in the Parish hall. Parishioners meet for Coffee Time after Mass to socialize and enjoy free coffee and pastries. Volunteers from the Coffee Ministry organize this weekly event, set up, and clean up afterwards. There are many

other events, activities, and services within the Parish that parishioners utilize or involve themselves with. Overall, St Ignatius is an active Parish.

St Ignatius currently has approximately 800 families in the community who attend Mass and participate in the Parish. Participants commented on their observations on the Parish population. Participant SI13 noted the diversity in income groups;

And I've been in a number of Parishes across Canada. I've been in a Parish in Ottawa when I did my PhD, I've been in two Parishes in Toronto, a couple of Parishes here in Winnipeg, and I would say St Ignatius is the top most active Parish I've seen. And I think part of it is the demographic profile of that Parish. [St. Ignatius] is in a location which kind of crosses between some sort of fairly well to do areas, you know, Yale and Harvard, they're large houses that are owned by lawyers and rich businesspeople. Then there are lower middle class and low-income people who are at that church, closer to apartments near Corydon avenue and Grant avenue. So, it's got a mixture of people there, and that gives it an extra interesting edge compared to a Parish like St Gianna's, which is a newly created Parish, heavily Filipino, but it's in the suburbs, so it doesn't have the mixture of income groups. (SI13)

Participant SI11 noted the changing demographic and how it has diversified over time;

St Ignatius is a church that predominately was a white congregation, Italian, white Christians, Catholics, who of course aren't going to church. But the fact is white people aren't going to church. [Now]... if you come to our Masses, half of the people, easily half minorities. Very eclectic. (SI11)

Based on my personal observations, there was also a prominent aging population. I only attended Mass on Sundays, but the 9:30 am Mass was more popular for families, and the 11:00 am Mass had a more aging population.

4.2.1 Environmental Committee

Research participants spoke of environmental thought and activity within St Ignatius prior to 2006, but it was noted that environmental activity was not officially recognized until 2006 with the formation of the Environment Committee. The committee was formed in response to a growing interest in and need for action on the environment as represented in the Parish. The

goals of the Environment Committee are to, “provide education to increase awareness of the environment and society’s impact on it, and to promote reduce, reuse and recycle in the church and community to minimize the impact on the environment” (Environment Committee, 2017). Following their goals, the Environment Committee organizes various sustainability activities in the Parish, as well as heading any environmental initiatives.

The Environment Committee meets monthly in the education centre. They plan events and activities, discuss logistics, environmental issues, and any other environmental topics the members would like to discuss. Meetings act both as a planning platform, as well as a place for members to exchange and work on ideas. Each meeting is opened and closed with a prayer, meant to intertwine faith and environmental thought. Committee members are mostly individuals who are retired, with a few exceptions.

Several research participants noted that there was some push-back when the Environment Committee was first formed. Some parishioners disagreed with some of the work the Environment Committee was doing. According to participant SI04, this push-back has lessened over the years. One of the first things the Environment Committee (EC) did was spearhead a new waste management system and get rid of Styrofoam cups for Coffee Time and events and replace with them reusable cups. This system included a recycling and compost option. Prior to this system there was no recycling or compost in the Parish. Some parishioners were reluctant to use the reusable cups instead of Styrofoam, and some had difficulty using the new waste system. With time, the committee persevered and implemented effective change. The EC has organized a number of other events or education initiatives within the Parish throughout their history. Within St Ignatius, any sustainability initiative or event that I discovered was organized by the committee. Besides some possible overlap with other social justice initiatives, it does not seem

like there is environmental work coming from other facets within the Parish, apart from the work of some individuals. For example, individuals within the Knights of Columbus were instrumental in replacing the lightbulbs in the Parish with LED lightbulbs. No initiatives came from the top-down; everything has been a grass-roots, bottom up.

The EC shares information through various channels including bulletins, word of mouth, posters, and articles. Every Sunday there is a bulletin available for parishioners that includes a schedule of Mass including hymns and prayers, a list of upcoming events, and news blurbs. The EC used to contribute to the St Ignatius monthly newsletter where they shared information, but that newsletter has been discontinued. EC members share information amongst each other during their monthly meetings. For example, new ideas, and environmental issues and topics of interest, upcoming plans, and new ideas. When I was recruiting participants and marketing my research it was first discussed in an EC meeting, a blurb was included in the Sunday bulletin for several weeks, and with help of the EC, we spread information through word of mouth at Coffee Time.

4.2.2 Sustainability Activity

As stated, sustainability activities are driven by the Environment Committee and individual parishioners. The most prominent and universal sustainability activity is the reduction of disposable items and the implementation of a new waste management system by the EC, which is further discussed below. The EC has also implemented numerous other activities in its lifespan as listed in Table 5.

Table 5 St. Ignatius Parish sustainability activity

Activity Category	Specific activity
Activism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter writing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The EC wrote the Manitoba Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship in 2012 and 2015 on the Green Plan and waste reduction ● Petition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Petition opposing the Energy East Pipeline
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Films include: Blue Gold, Inconvenient Truth, Scars of Mercury, Rain Forest ○ Q and A after film, pending interest ● Workshop, presentation or speaker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Q and A after presentations ○ Green fairs hosted by the MB Eco Network ○ Topics include: The Green Psalter, Genetically Modified Crops, Energy East Pipeline, Veolia water issue Genetically Modified Crops, Thomas Berry, Voluntary Simplicity ● Waste education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Word of mouth, discussion ○ Posters, flyers ○ Hands-on-application, shown how to sort waste ○ Compost workshop
Environment and Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Active transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bike racks purchased by the EC ● General awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Posters and information available on bulletins and at the church office ○ Articles that used to be written by the EC for parishioners ● Green Products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sold fair trade coffee and soap nuts during Coffee Time in the Parish hall after Mass ○ Products funded the EC ● Reusing, Recycling and compost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transitioned away from disposable cups to reusable cups and cutlery ○ Developed policy pamphlet for waste ○ Developed a waste management system (for recycling and compost) ○ Enlisted a compost pick up service ○ Attempting to become a zero-waste church
Green church activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Greening Sacred Spaces program (funding from the David Suzuki Foundation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Waste management system ○ Added sustainability themed books to the Parish library. Ex) Renewing the Sacred Balance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduced LED lights (Knights of Columbus) • General socializing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discussion and involvement with waste ○ Management over coffee
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Activism is the least discussed category of sustainability activity in the Parish. The EC wrote letters to the Manitoban Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship in both 2012 and 2015 about the proposed Green Plan at the time, specifically addressing waste reduction. The EC provided commentary in their 2012 letter on the proposed Green Plan. The EC discussed the need to ban the cosmetic use of pesticides in urban environments, they discussed climate change and the need to protect peat land and implement a carbon tax, and the need to ban bear baiting. In the 2015 letter, the EC discussed their thoughts on how to reduce waste in landfills by 50 percent. The suggestions the EC provided include, establish a collection system for compostables, corporate regulation, encourage the return of disposable items, plastic bags reduction, among approximately ten other suggestions. The EC successfully took action and organized a petition opposing the Energy East pipeline, while also involving several other FCs.

The EC has focused a lot of their energy on *sustainability education* in St Ignatius. The most commonly discussed education initiative addressed reusable items and the waste management system. The EC spent a lot of time and energy implementing these systems at St Ignatius. Although it might seem like this should be simple to some, it was far from simple. A diverse population also means diverse levels of sustainability commitment and knowledge. The EC spent approximately two years consistently discussing waste with parishioners, providing educational material, and assisting parishioners with waste sorting. At Coffee Time, committee members would go table to table speaking to parishioners about the waste system, showing

parishioners how to sort waste properly, providing posters and handouts, and hosted a compost workshop. The EC also stationed committee members at the waste bins to help parishioners sort their waste. The compost workshop the EC hosted was available for committee leaders so they could bring that information back to their committee members and disseminate the information they learned. At the time, the workshop was partially successful with only limited attendance. With the new waste management system, the EC also implemented a waste policy. Information on the waste policy is available at the administration office in the Parish.

The EC screened several educational films. For example, *An Inconvenient Truth* and *Blue Gold*. A question and answer period and discussion were held after these film events where participants could discuss the information they learned. The EC organized several sustainability presentations available for parishioners to attend. Examples are included in Table 5. Each sustainability event or program the EC organized has an educational element to it, but these events were specifically organized as educational events.

There were several general *environment and conservation* programs available within St. Ignatius, including general awareness, green products, and waste management. General awareness includes general sustainability campaigns and information, such as ‘Reduce, Reuse, Recycle’. There are posters and flyers available at the administrative office, and whenever there is a program or campaign this information is advertised with general posters. The EC used to publish sustainability articles available to the Parish that provided general sustainability information, but the EC no longer publishes these articles because the St Ignatius newsletter is no longer active. The EC has also sold fair trade coffee and soap nuts in the past to encourage the use of green products and fund the EC. The EC no longer sells fair trade coffee because it is now available at an affordable price in grocery stores. Fair trade coffee is still being used during

Coffee Time. The EC also sold an information-based poster that intertwined religion and sustainability. Participant SIO4 stated that many parishioners would purchase this poster to put up in their office.

General church activity overlaps with general awareness, but includes the Greening Sacred Spaces program, energy use, general socializing, and library activity. The EC at St Ignatius received 1000\$ in funding from the Greening Sacred Spaces Program through an interfaith network to implement sustainability initiatives. The EC used this funding to begin sustainability work in the Parish. General socializing within the Parish is very important for sustainability activity within St Ignatius. Socializing opportunities provide space for parishioners to discuss sustainability issues, or other sustainability information they have learned. Participants discussed socializing as a way they've learned about different sustainability issues and ideas. Energy usage within the church was only discussed by a few participants but is an important aspect of church activity. One participant introduced LED lighting to the Parish and has contributed to the overall energy reduction. There is no parking lot for the Parish, so parishioners rely on street parking or public transportation. There is a bike rack available for bike parking that was purchased by the EC. There is a library in the Education Centre at the Parish. The EC has contributed to the library by occasionally purchasing sustainability-based books that are available to all parishioners. However, it is not well known that these books are available.

4.2.3 Barriers within the Church

The data indicate that the EC faces several barriers to implementing sustainability activity and communication, and these barriers add to the overall barriers some FCs face when advocating for sustainability. One, St. Ignatius is a large congregation that serves a large population. Two participants I interviewed were unaware of the EC's existence, and 3

respondents to the questionnaire said that St Ignatius did not have an active EC, and 16 were unsure out of 37 responses. Several participants discussed access to information and communication as barriers to sustainability activity and spreading information. The EC has faced some limitations with advertising events and messages. At present, word of mouth advertisement is limited to Coffee Time, as handing out flyers or speaking with parishioners about EC events is prohibited in the main church area. The Parish hall at Coffee Time is the main stage for the EC. The restrictions on this in comparison to other ministries who advertise fundraising events and other social justice campaigns during announcements in Mass has presented barriers to the EC to membership and event recruitment.

The EC has coordinated all environmental events in St Ignatius, but events are not consistent or frequent. The EC does have the consistent waste management programs and reusable dishes and cutlery, and other events occur when the EC is able to manage. The aging EC membership and lack of accessibility to some communication platforms has made it difficult to establish new events and programs. For example, I spent approximately 3 months with the parishioners of St Ignatius administering questionnaires, observation, and interviewing participants, and within this time frame I was not able to attend an event because none were scheduled. Barriers are further discussed in Chapter 5.

4.3 Case Study: The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg

The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg (UUCW) is centrally located in Winnipeg, Manitoba at 603 Wellington Crescent and serves approximately 184 adults and 60 children (UUCW, 2019). The UUCW has been at this location since 1997, but the church itself was established in Winnipeg around 1892 (UUCW, 2019). The UUCW started as the First Icelandic Unitarian Church around 1892, and the English speaking, All Souls Unitarian Church,

formed in 1904 (UUCW, 2019). For an in-depth history of the progression of the UUCW refer to the UUCW website (<https://www.uuwinnipeg.mb.ca/>).

A large portion of the UUCW budget comes directly from UU members. Every year there is a pledge drive where congregation members contribute to the budget of that year. There is also an ongoing endowment fund where individuals can gift money to the congregation. Rental fees for outside events also contribute to the overall budget. The budget is transparent and available on the UUCW website for anyone who would like to review it.

The UUCW is the only Unitarian Universalist church in Winnipeg and is very active in social justice action. Committees in this regard include the Green Action Committee, Harvest Food Bank, Global Outreach, and Friends of Refuge. Children education is held on Sunday's from the Religious Exploration Committee. There is one service a week on Sunday's at 10:30am. Each month there is a different theme services follow. Examples of some monthly themes are restoration, making change, and ancestors.

UUCW also provides coffee and snacks after Sunday service for any member who would like to stay and socialize. Reusable mugs and dishes are used, and compost and recycling are available for waste management. Because the small community of the UUCW only meets once a week and there is only one UU church in Winnipeg, sometimes it is difficult to find support for certain activities. For example, one research participant discussed the idea of a vegetable garden on-site at the church, but because the population is so wide-spread throughout Winnipeg it can be difficult for individuals because someone would need to be there every day to maintain the garden, and some people have to travel quite far to attend Sunday service.

4.3.1 Green Action Committee

The Green Action Committee (GAC) was formed through the recognized need and interest of the UUCW congregation members. Sustainability discussions and action occurred prior to 2009, but the GAC formally started around 2009 with the encouragement of the interim minister. The GAC has developed a mandate and list of responsibilities that is followed and have taken action on several issues.

The GAC meets monthly and discusses sustainability issues, upcoming events, and plans for future events and activities. At meetings, GAC members brainstorm, discuss different sustainability issues, and exchange ideas. Committee members are mostly retired individuals, with a few exceptions.

The Green Action Committee seemed to be quite active in the broader community, hosting several events and hosting a Sunday service on Earth Day. Most sustainability-focused activity is organized by the GAC, but the GAC has partnered with several organizations for events. Other committees or individuals have participated or organized sustainability-related work, but the primary focus was not on sustainability. For example, a bike workshop was organized to help people navigate bike paths and learn bike maintenance. This supports active transportation, but the primary focus was not on why active transportation is important. Sustainability initiatives at the UUWC have all come from the bottom up through the GAC and congregation members, with the exception of a new project from the GAC to become a green sanctuary through the Green Sanctuary Program, which is an international accreditation available in Canada and the US. Although this is the only institutional level program at UUCW coming from the top down, the UUCW and principles of the UU institution support the sustainability work within the UUCW. The seventh principle of the UU faith provides a guide for UUCW

members that encourages the support of sustainability initiatives. More about the UU faith and principles is discussed in Chapter 5.

The GAC shares information with the congregation through announcements during services, articles in the church newsletter, emails, the website, sharing information in programs or events, and by speaking with congregation members. It is easy for the GAC to share information with congregation members, with no discussed barriers to how or where information or events are shared. When I first began my research at UUWC, I presented my research proposal to the GAC and answered questions. After this, information on my research was provided in the Sunday handouts, announcements were made during Sunday service, I provided hand-outs, I stayed for coffee time on Sundays to meet and speak with congregation members, and I was able to share information on the UUWC Facebook page. Overall, there were many mediums easily accessible to share sustainability information.

4.3.2. Sustainability Activity

Sustainability activity in UUWC comes from the Green Action Committee and some related events. The GAC hosts many different educational events, such as presentations and film screenings. The GAC has also implemented or supports various other activities or initiatives.

Past and present sustainability activities are listed in Table 6.

Table 6 Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg sustainability activity

Activity Category	Specific activity
Activism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Occasional letter sent to politician ○ Example: letter to province on water monitoring, consultation on climate change • Electoral Forums <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mayoral Fast Pitch and Forum

Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the Blue Dot campaign • Film/documentary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Generation Zapped <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Film Electromagnetic Radiation ▪ Q and A after the film ▪ Educational material provided at the film (articles, etc.) ○ Alberta Tar Sands (co-sponsored with Council of Canadians) ○ Film on biking (co-sponsored with Biking to the Future) • Workshop, presentation or speaker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Permaculture and biophilia ○ Climate Change ○ MB Pork • Religious Exploration • Book Club <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This Changes Everything, Naomi Klein • Bike Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learn how to navigate biking in Winnipeg, bike maintenance, etc.
Environment and Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information in church newsletter, email, website • Reusing, Recycling and compost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GAC coordinates volunteers to set out bins and turn compost ○ GAC started compost project in 2008/2009 ○ GAC started battery recycling in 2013/2014
Green church activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigating ‘Green Sanctuary’ accreditation • Energy use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Energy audit ○ LED lights ○ Looking to replace heating system • General socializing • Environmentally themed sermons/services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Earth Day Services ○ Topic examples from Sunday sermons: “A Journey to a Greener World”, “Renewable Energy and Climate Change” • Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Winnipeg Harvest Depot ○ Harvest Moon Coop pick up location ○ Share the plate • General Church Fundraising

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sale of organic honey and fair-trade coffee ○ Sale of used items (books, furniture, etc.)
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Activities most discussed by research participants were the electoral forums and educational events, as well as compost and recycling. The GAC hosted some *activism*-based activity at UUCW, which included letter writing, hosting the electoral forums, and supporting campaigns such as the Blue Dot campaign. Letter writing includes writing to government officials and politicians on sustainability related issues. Also, the whole congregation supports ‘the right for a healthy environment’, has made a statement on the UUCW website, and has sent letters to Manitoba government officials and the City of Winnipeg. The GAC has organized electoral forums during elections where political candidates discuss issues and answer questions from the audience. Many participants cited this event as one of the most important educational events from the GAC. The electoral forums are also well-attended by the broader Winnipeg community. The GAC, and the UUWC, advertise and support the Blue Dot Campaign, which is a campaign from the David Suzuki Foundation to support the right to a healthy environment.

Education events are frequently available at UUWC. While I was doing my field work, I was able to attend a presentation on climate change, a presentation on permaculture, and a documentary on the environmental and health impacts of electromagnetic radiation. The presentation on climate change was attended by approximately 15 people of about 40 plus years in age. The presentation included a general overview of climate change and its impacts. There was a question and answer period after the presentation where attendees asked a variety of questions or made comments about the content of the presentation. There was no discussion or connection to faith in the presentation or discussion afterward. The documentary, titled *Generation Zapped*, was shown in the UUCW sanctuary in the evening. Educational material

was available at a table at the back for any attendee to take home with them. Material included multiple journal articles and information sheets. Information included websites to look at, tips to reduce radiation, and symptoms of electro-sensitivity. The event was very well attended, with maybe 40 or more people in attendance. The film was introduced by the moderator, followed by a discussion. Discussion lasted for some time due to sound issues. The documentary was then shown, followed by a question and answer period. There was a lot of interest, and many individuals asked questions and fuelled discussion, and the moderator fielded questions. The moderator was very knowledgeable on the topic. The inspiration for the event came from the personal experience of the moderator who wanted to share this information on a rarely discussed topic. On each Earth Day, the GAC organizes and hosts the entire Sunday service. The service in 2018 included a story related to the earth, hymns, and a sermon on biophilia. Following the Earth Day Sunday service was an informal talk on permaculture in the house portion of the church. Approximately 10 individuals attended the small talk. Other events have been hosted throughout the GAC's history, but these events provide an overview of the kind of information that is presented, and how the events are hosted. It is important to note that every sustainability event, program, or initiative within the UUCW provides an opportunity for learning, but these events were specifically organized as educational events.

General *environment and conservation* initiatives are present within the UUCW. Active transportation was not discussed often, but it was generally supported through access to bike racks and research participants discussing ride share options. General awareness within the church was present through newsletter information, advertising of upcoming events or programs, the available waste management system, and other related events. The waste management system is supported by the GAC. Individuals take turns turning the compost in the compost bin, and take

turns putting out the recycling. Participants spoke about recycling and compost in the church as a learning tool, but based on observation, many members were aware of these services and adhered to it. The UUWC has their own compost in the yard and requires volunteers to turn the compost for air flow.

Some general *green church activity* at the UUWC include energy use, general socializing, sustainability themes within Sunday services, and related social justice initiatives. The UUWC aims to be as sustainable as funds will allow in the church and is looking to work towards a ‘Green Sanctuary’ accreditation. The Sanctuary within a UU church is the space where services are held. This is still in the planning process as of March, 2019, but GAC requested an energy audit of the building, which led to replacing lights with LED lightbulbs and considering more efficient heating options. General socializing is a very important sustainability activity, because many UUCW members learn and exchange ideas with one another. For example, participants discussed sharing information on sustainability-related initiatives in the community, such as Fruit Share and Peg City Car Co-op. Fundraising activity within the church has also been linked to sustainability. Organic honey and fair-trade coffee are sold at the kiosk in the church to raise funds for the church. UUWC also hosts ‘yard sale’ type sales of re-used and recycled items, such as books and furniture, to raise funds for the church. Sustainability themes pop-up in Sunday services, but the most prominent and obvious service is the Earth Day service in April every year. Other church activity that is related to sustainability is the Winnipeg Harvest Depot, Harvest Moon Coop pickup, Share the Plate partnerships, among others. The Winnipeg Harvest Depot and Harvest Moon Coop are outside organizations, but UUWC support those organizations by providing space within their church, while also providing access to congregation members. Congregation members volunteer to run the Winnipeg Harvest Depot

every Thursday morning. During a Sunday service an offering plate is passed around for congregation members to donate money to support the church. Part of this offering will also be donated to a local organization, for example, the Bear Clan. This sharing of the collection plate is called Share the Plate. Information is also shared in the monthly UUWC newsletter, through email, and on the UUWC website.

4.3.3 Barriers within the Church

Participants mentioned no institutional barriers to sustainability within the church. The seventh principle, which is discussed further in Chapter 5, has roots in sustainability and action and generally supports sustainability activity within the church. The barriers discussed mostly had to do with people. For example, participant UU02 discussed barriers as, “Time. Commitment. I think just people deciding that this is something they can and want to prioritize right now” (UU02). These are general barriers that are not unique to this FC, or other groups for that matter. Other barriers within the church extend to debating what should be prioritized, who is available to volunteer, and how will it be funded. As for barriers that come from UUWC church dynamic, UU02 brought up an interesting idea,

And because it is a very non pushy faith, that it is leaving it up to the members. I can sort of almost imagine if we were in a church where they make it something more of a must. More people would be involved, but then are they involved because you’re making them, or because they truly want to be involved. So, I think that there’s a positive negative in the approach in the way you deal with the members of the congregation that way. Its sort of one of those sorts of funny things. Maybe we would have more involvement if we forced more people to do it. (UU02)

This idea discusses how although UU intrinsically supports sustainability initiatives, there might be something missing that ‘pushes’ congregation members to participate. Another barrier some participants discussed was that they thought more could be done within the church. For example,

Well its frustrating when our church won't be as conscientious or as active as we'd like it to be. It's not putting its money where its mouth is. We waste a lot of energy and materials. And that is a barrier, that is frustrating. (UU11/12)

As discussed, the barriers research participants discussed were more on a personal level, or were ideas brought forth. Generally, it was the level of commitment individuals could or could not bring to sustainability action. Further barriers are discussed in Chapter 5.

4.4 Networks within the Faith Communities

Participants in both faith communities utilized networks within their community. It is apparent that the FCs provide a social network for parishioners.

By being part of a denomination, you're connected to all these different things. So, there are those things that are just automatic, and we see them very much in the Parish. But the third thing that happens, because it's an active Parish, it's very cognizant of issues that arise in the local community. (SI13)

This participant points out that just be being part of a faith community you are automatically connected to what happens within that community. By being part of a FC, you have access to various networks. Socializing as a sustainability activity is an example of participants utilizing networks within the FC to share information. For example:

So I found out about Car Coop through the church, Fruit Share through the church, so it hasn't necessarily taught me that, 'oh you should forage for food in order to reduce the distances that stuff gets trucked', it hasn't taught me that. I know that, but it's given me another option to do that. And then I joined Fruit Share, and then that kind of goes out from there. It becomes part of what feeds my life and gives me all these different ways of connecting with people and find my peeps. (UU09)

There are often new things, Sunday we had [a permaculture presentation], and I found him really interesting to hear. And I wouldn't have heard him otherwise if I didn't belong to the church, so we sort of network with other groups. I'm exposed to more people and ideas that I would be otherwise. [...] I guess it's just deepened my commitment to sustainability (UU13).

The FC acts as a space where members can utilize networks and connect with one another. At times, the FCs also partnered with other FCs or organizations for a sustainability activity. This did not occur frequently, but it did occur. For example, one participant noted, “We have a lot of connections with other groups. When they’ve put on forums, they usually do it in cooperation with at least a couple other groups” (UU13), and another participant noted that their faith community partnered with the Manitoba Eco-Network for some events and involved some other churches in a petition (SI09). Therefore, the FCs also have access to networks of other FCs and groups.

4.5 Discussion

St Ignatius and the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg share some similarities, but also hold several significant differences. Both have networks within their community, have established a strong community presence through various committee work, fundraising, and other congregational activity. The main differences in sustainability activity between the two FCs is the frequency of sustainability events, and the level of support available from the wider FC population and leadership. There are also differences between the sustainability activity available to FC members and barriers to action faced by each community. Table 7 provides an overview comparison of the key variables mentioned in the data about the two FCs.

Table 7 Comparison of St. Ignatius and the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg

St Ignatius	First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong community presence • Social justice focused (Jesuit) • Strong institutional influence (Magisterium) • Large population: services approx. 800 families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong community presence • Social justice and sustainability focused • Minimal Institutional influence • Small population: services approx. 130 families

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church demographic: mix of aging population and families, ethnicities • Regular services (Mass) every day of the week • Active Environment Committee (EC) • EC meets monthly • EC- members aging • Established sustainability activity (waste management) • Irregular sustainability events • Mixed opinions on how faith supports sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church demographic: mix of aging population and families, ethnicities • Regular service every Sunday • Active Green Action Committee (GAC) • GAC meets monthly • GAC- members aging • Established sustainability activity (waste management) • Regular sustainability events • Consistent opinions/support on how faith supports sustainability (7th principle)
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St Ignatius and the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg have a range of sustainability activities available to their congregation members as outlined in Tables 5 and 6 above. Kidwell *et al.* (2018) found that congregations engage in sustainability either through the leadership of one, an integrated top-down approach, or through the work of an organized group. St. Ignatius and UUCW both engage in sustainability through the work of committees. The literature discusses how a faith community is an expression of its members (e.g., Smith, 1979). This is apparent in the sustainability activity present in each FC. Since most of the sustainability activity is coming from the committees, and thus the committee members, the activity available is an expression of the EC and GAC members. In addition to the actions being grounded in the committees formed, one could see this relationship on some of the activities undertaken. For example, the GAC at the UUCW has an activist bent and organized political events regarding sustainability that reached far beyond their faith community.

Each FC also shares similarities to that of an ENGO, in fact I found evidence that the committees acted more like an ENGO within that FC. For example, ENGOs use various communication strategies, such as public mobilization, to shift perspectives and influence environmental policy (Hessing *et al.*, 2005; VanNijnatten, 2016). The committees within the FCs

used this same strategy to communicate their message to FC members and beyond. Both FCs have participated in politicized actions that target political institutions (Hessing *et al.*, 2005). For example, St. Ignatius organized the petition against the Energy East pipeline, and the UUCW has organized several electoral forums. However, neither FC strongly focuses on politicized actions frequently.

Each FC has also worked hard to establish a sustainability presence, but each has faced barriers leading to different kinds of successes. They have faced some similar challenges to ENGOs, such as issues with funding (Hessing *et al.*, 2005). However, the FCs have much more organizational stability than ENGOs (Hessing *et al.*, 2005). While the FCs themselves sometimes have great access to resources, the committees did not seem to have the same access to resources, which compares to ENGOS whose resources cannot match those of the government (Hessing *et al.*, 2005). This is truer for St. Ignatius than for UUCW. Veldman *et al.*, (2014) cites barriers for FCs as decreasing FC members, staff and volunteers, hierarchies within the faith communities themselves, and lack of interest on sustainability among leadership. These barriers mimic the barriers found in the data for St. Ignatius, and the barrier of needing more people involved is also true for UUCW. While participants did not discuss decreasing FC members, they did discuss difficulties in finding volunteers to help with actions. The demographic of both committees also mimics the barrier of decreasing FC members, as the committees were mostly retirees with no youth volunteers.

The EC at St. Ignatius has focused much of their energy on education, with particular attention to waste management. They have successfully planned and hosted several other sustainability related activities, but education has been the primary focus. They have also organized a few activism-based activities, but most of the focus of these is on encouraging

individuals within the Parish to take small personal steps to contribute to sustainability. The UUCW has also focused on education but has been able to cast a wider net by taking on a larger variety of educational topics, as well as embedding more sustainability-related activity directly within the church. For example, structure and energy use of the building, sustainability aspects within Sunday services, and partnerships with other committees or organizations. These findings for both FCs confirm Veldman *et al.*, (2014) finding that most FCs are focusing their energy on personal and local green initiatives and greening the FC building. At UUCW participants discussed mostly personal change when it came to sustainability activity, such as acquiring new information on a local program or topic.

The literature also discusses how a faith community can potentially influence worldview, engage a large audience, provide space for communication, and use institutional and economic resources to build programs and link people (e.g., Veldman *et al.*, 2014; Haluza-DeLay, 2014; Jurdi et al., 2017; Bomberg & Hague, 2018). The data presented in this chapter confirms that the FCs have engaged a large audience and provide space for communication through networks. Both have brought people together within their FC through communication strategies and organized activity. Some St. Ignatius participants noted how their institution can be a barrier to sustainability engagement. While there are institutional and economic resources, it does not seem either FC has access to them. One thing rarely discussed in regard to the organized sustainability activities of each FC was how the FC itself can influence personal worldviews. Some participants discussed sustainability activities that were framed in relation to faith, but it was not universal throughout all activities. The EC at St. Ignatius does support Creation Care, but it does not seem to be discussed with the broader Parish population who are not triggered by a sustainability activity. UUCW research participants discussed the 7th principle, but the principle

was more implicitly understood in activities versus explicitly discussed. Whether the FCs influenced personal worldview will be discussed further in Chapter 6, and connections between faith and sustainability are further discussed in Chapter 5. However, through documenting available sustainability activity in each FC it is apparent that sustainability activities are not normally being framed by connecting faith and sustainability. If the connections between faith and sustainability activity were more universally apparent and communicated more widely within the Parish, it is possible that activity would be much more prominent and frequent.

CHAPTER 5: CONNECTIONS BETWEEN FAITH AND SUSTAINABILITY

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on connections between faith and sustainability activities as discussed by participants. In my discussions with them, participants established their personal definitions of sustainability and if or how their sustainability activities are connected to their faith. Some participants directly linked their faith to their sustainability engagement, while some participants discussed faith as a secondary supporting factor to sustainability. In many instances, participants did not speak solely of personal faith, but naturally discussed their FC within this context. This section also focuses on participants' perceptions of motivations and barriers with faith and sustainability, particularly in their community. In many instances, participants spoke of their FC in motivations and barriers versus personal faith. The headers in this chapter were grounded in the literature of religious tradition, sustainability definitions, and religious environmentalism, but the results included under each header was grounded in the data and came about through participant interviews and qualitative questionnaires organized in NVivo.

5.2 Faith and Attitudes

In both St. Ignatius and UUCW, the faith and attitudes of research participants generally aligned with their faith community. Of course, there were differences between St. Ignatius and UUCW in religious views, but there was some overlap in participant's personal connections to sustainability.

St. Ignatius and UUCW differed in what connected members within a congregation. At St. Ignatius, parishioners are united by Catholicism, while at UUCW congregation members are

united by a set of principles. At UUCW, several participants discussed the idea that congregation members are generally like-minded. For example, participant UU09 explains,

... I think it [sustainability] is more central because we are not a community that is united by a belief in God, we're a community that's united in a belief in principles. And one of the principles, one of the seven principles of our faith, is worth of the interdependent web of life in which we're all a part. And so, because that's actually one of the 7 principles of our faith, I think it makes it more central. (UU09)

Connections between faith and sustainability are discussed later in this chapter, but ultimately, this connection of 'like-minded people' is different than St Ignatius, where parishioners attend the church because they identify as Catholic and share a belief in God. For example,

But I think that a faith community, you know I'm not going to go around to my fellow parishioners and ask, oh how did you vote in the last election. I know that we're all different political stripes and things like that. And I think that's the big benefit of a community like that, whereas in secular it's easier to pick and choose who you speak to, who you're going to interact with. So, I think it's easier to avoid your opponents in the secular world. While in a faith-based group you're more likely to run into people that you might not agree with 100% of the time, but you already have this thing in common, you already share one perspective. And I think that's the point where we can build (SI07)

Therefore, the UUCW participant felt united to other FC members by a common trust in a set of principles, and the St. Ignatius participant felt united to other FC members by a common trust in God.

5.3 Definitions of Sustainability

In Chapter 2, I discussed the definition of sustainability and how it would be used in this thesis. Research participants were asked what sustainability meant to them, which got participants thinking about their personal definitions and connections to sustainability. Common

themes that came up included zero waste, consumption, distribution of resources, saving the planet, living within our means, among other ideas. For example,

Sustainability means taking care of things, and not harming. Thinking about the end result of what you're buying and what you're doing. You know, if you purchase something, where is it going to end when you're done. It means taking care of all aspects of the earth. Being concerned. (SI04)

Well, I think long term having an earth that is healthy, and productive for the next generation, and beyond. That's what I think. A sustainable environment that I don't think right now we're nearly there. (UU06)

I think sustainability means to make an effort to have zero waste product. Zero garbage, zero emissions, zero effect, so for example when we go canoeing in Lake of the Woods in an area called ELA [Experimental Lakes Area], we attempt to leave the site with less evidence that humans have been there, than we found it. And I think that's sustainability. We're in a canoe, the only thing that we're doing is burning fossil fuels. SO that's the only thing we're doing that produces anything. All the food that we have is not canned, not in plastic, so that is what is sustainable. Sustainability to me is how to sustain the earth by leaving no footprint (SI01)

It means trying to live in a way whether it's privately or as a community, in a way that will not require replacement and throw away stuff. Because we are needing to look at the long range and not just living for today and what's comfortable for today and what's convenient for today. (UU03)

One participant discussed sustainability as a lifestyle choice, which connects to most participants' personal definitions of sustainability. Participants discussed generally taking care of the planet and taking care of its resources, but many made links to living sustainably. For example, consuming products, waste, and being conscious of choices.

A participant at St. Ignatius noted that there were many elderly people in the community that were practicing sustainability without having a personal definition of sustainability.

Participant SI02 noted that, "The other truth is that that generation of people were sustainable without even calling it that" (SI02). Other participants discussed this notion of practicing sustainability out of necessity in order to save money. So, while individuals were practicing

some aspects of sustainability, such as reusing items and consuming less, it was usually not in the intention of ‘taking care of the earth’.

Definitions of sustainability were not rooted in participant’s faith community. Not one participant mentioned their faith when defining sustainability. Most participants did note that their journey to sustainability began outside their FC but continued within their FC. Some participants enhanced their understanding of sustainability within their FC, and some participants linked their sustainability action to their own faith.

5.4 Connections between Faith and Sustainability

Participants noted varied relationships between their faith and connections to sustainability. As noted above, no participants discussed personal faith when they discussed their own definitions of sustainability. However, participants did discuss personal connections between faith and sustainability.

In the qualitative questionnaire distributed in both St. Ignatius and UUCW, 29 participants said faith was part of their motivation to participate in sustainability activities. In the questionnaire 16 out of 37 participants at St. Ignatius and 13 out of 26 participants at UUCW said faith was part of their motivation to participate in sustainability activities, as noted in Table 8. It is worth noting that not all participants responded to this question.

Table 8 Qualitative questionnaire responses

Was faith part of your motivation to participate in sustainability activities?	St. Ignatius number of participants	UUCW number of participants
Yes	16	13
No	14	5

The questionnaire indicated that both UUCW and St. Ignatius participants saw faith as a motivation to participate in sustainability activities, but also indicated a number of participants

that did not see faith as a motivation. Participants were also asked to comment and elaborate on their ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer, which is noted in Table 9.

Table 9 Sustainability motivations taken from questionnaire data

St Ignatius		UUCW	
Why Yes?	Why No?	Why Yes?	Why no?
Take care of God’s creation (creation care) (10 respondents) Interconnectedness of the universe (2) <i>Laudato Si</i> (2) Care for future generations (1) Part of Christianity/Faith part of who I am (2)	Participated before connecting to faith (2) Important regardless of faith (1)	7 th principle (8) Protect Mother Earth (1) To be responsible for living on this earth (2) UU principles consistent with personal principles (chose church because of principles) (2)	Practicing sustainability before involvement in Church (2) Chose church because it reflected values (1)

Not all participants chose to comment on their ‘yes’ answer, but most of those who did comment linked an aspect of their FC shared beyond their local congregation. For example, the most popular response from UUCW for linking faith and sustainability was the 7th principle, which is a uniting principle held for all Unitarian Universalists. The most popular response from St. Ignatius for linking faith and sustainability was ‘taking care of God’s creation’. ‘Taking care of God’s creation’ is not embedded in Catholicism like the 7th principle is in UUism, but it is a uniting idea across Catholics who follow Creation Care. Participants at both St. Ignatius and UUCW said faith was not part of their motivation to participate in sustainability activities because they were already participating in sustainability activity prior to their involvement in the church. Other ‘no’ answers followed this same theme.

The question of the intersection of faith and sustainability actions was explored and elaborated on in semi-structured interviews in both St Ignatius and UUCW. Interviewees shed more light on the degree to which participants felt faith was a motivation to participate in sustainability or linked to sustainability. Data in the table below show that faith either supported sustainability activity, a participant saw sustainability as part of their faith, or faith and sustainability were not separate for a participant. Data were placed in the category of ‘faith supports sustainability activity’ when a participant engaged in sustainability for reasons not linked with their faith community, but their faith supports their engagement. Data were placed in the category of ‘sustainability is part of faith’ when a participant linked aspects of their faith to sustainability, such as teachings and documents, but still saw their faith and sustainability as separate. Data were placed in the category of ‘faith and sustainability are not separate’ when a participant did not differentiate between their faith and sustainability and viewed them as ‘one in the same’. Each of these is explored in in Tables 10 and 11. At UUCW, some participants spoke of the 7th principle as a motivation to participate in sustainability activity. However, most participants said they engaged in sustainability for other reasons, and their FC supports their sustainability activity.

Table 10 The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg participants’ connections between faith and sustainability

<p>Faith supports sustainability activity (7 participants)</p>	<p>It continues that, for sure. I think it supports me, it makes me feel good, it motivates me. Being a part of a group that wants to move in the same direction gives me that power and that motivation to be able to do it, so definitely, more in numbers. (UU02)</p>
<p>(Participant engages in sustainability for other reasons, but their faith</p>	<p>Yes, but I was definitely on that journey [towards sustainability] before I joined the UUCW. But one of the reasons I’ve stayed with the UUCW is because on so many different levels it’s a community of people that are like minded... So, there’s a lot of comfort in being in a community in which people actually get that [sustainability] and are working in the same direction. Not everyone’s perfect, and not everyone’s there for the same</p>

<p>supports their engagement)</p>	<p>reasons, but there is a general pull in the direction of sustainability, and a general pull in the direction of reducing consumption, and valuing nature, and that whole stewardship. And so, if I say some of the things that are important to me and the general public, I don't have an expectation that people will get it right away, but if I say it at the church I have an expectation that people will get it right away, and generally that's true. (UU09)</p> <p>It was part of my life prior to joining the church, and it did make me feel like I found the right community for me. What I do find is it sort of gives me more focus in terms of, 'this is a very big problem'. (UU08)</p> <p>I feel supported in it rather than just trying to do something on my own. And it's good to be with people who think the same way, have the same concerns. (UU13)</p> <p>It really had nothing to do with the church [laughter]. I think it's individual values., I think you're aware that the Unitarian church instead of having a creed has principles... I find that these are principles that I can readily adopt. They make sense to me. And I don't have to struggle with the idea of, oh do I believe this or do I not believe this. No, because the principles are appealing and make sense. (UU04) *</p> <p>No, because I had the [sustainability] mentality to begin with. And yes, because it supported my thinking and my values in that regard. And it is a community that is striving to become more sustainable and more aware and offers programs and workshops and speakers and so on and so forth on these topics (UU03)</p> <p>I think the two are connected, but not causally related. It makes sense to be concerned about not destroying our own habitat, and it makes sense in terms of the church's beliefs and also our own conduct. Has more to do with science and logic than it does to do with any religious precept [...]. I very often think about our 7th principle, being interconnected to everything (UU11)*</p>
<p>Sustainability is part of faith (1 participant)</p> <p>(Participant links aspects of their faith to sustainability. Ex, linked to religious</p>	<p>I believe God loves all of his 7 billion children, and he also loves every living thing. Every present and future man woman and child on this planet is my brother and sister and I value their lives like I value my own. I believe that God loves them as much as he loves me. As God's children, we're all in this together. This is a key belief of the UU church. We're interconnected with all other living things, not only people, but the wildlife, the flora and fauna as well. It's important to me, I feel bad about burning fossil fuels. I don't like travelling any more than necessary lot because cars and planes burn fossil fuels. (UU07) *</p>

documents, teachings, beliefs)	
<p>Faith and sustainability are not separate</p> <p>(3 participants)</p> <p>(Participant does not differentiate between their faith and sustainability belief, it is all part of who they are)</p>	<p>Well I guess maybe that is my faith, my own belief involves the earth, um, and living sustainably. So, I guess that is my own personal faith... I think it is one in the same, because my faith is more nature based than anything else. (UU01)</p> <p>I am inextricable from my faith...it informs and shapes everything that I do. Including the things that maybe I regret later, that regret comes from that is not who I aspire to be. (UU10)</p> <p>That's a much more complex question for a UU than for someone who is in a theist religion, right. I think it's integrated, because my faith is everything, but my faith is also nothing [laughter]. But it's like, ok, our first principle is I believe in the inherit dignity of every human being, so is that because of my faith, no. That's just, of course I believe that right, so, it's very hard, it's very nebulous my religion, if you can even call it that. It's very hard to put your finger on, ok where does my religion start and end and where do I start and end, because by the nature of it being so vague in a sense, its.... I don't know. I just know that it's a good fit for me, and it reinforces those things that I think are really important. (UU09)</p> <p>*Aligns with 7th principle</p>

Table 11 St. Ignatius participants' connections between faith and sustainability

<p>Faith supports sustainability activity</p> <p>(3 participants)</p> <p>(Participant engages in sustainability for other reasons, but their faith supports their engagement)</p>	<p>I think it [faith] supports it. But it wouldn't be a primary reason [to engage in sustainability activity]. I think regardless of citizens of this world we have a duty to protect it. Particularly for our children and younger generations (SI08)</p> <p>Well because we have principles of justice, charity, temperance, all that. And that can be applied to business decisions and sustainability for the environment and for the community all around. (SI05).</p> <p>[I participate] because I'm a human being... Yes, as long as were not saying Catholic faith, that has some influence, but I think just my faith in a supreme being that cares about us, well then, I think that yes, that influences if I keep going. (SI06)</p>
<p>Sustainability is part of faith</p> <p>(5 participants)</p>	<p>I have read from the Bible that the world was created by God, and he created it in a way that everyone could be satisfied. But I guess we humans we haven't been able to maintain that... That point where everyone can share the same resources. So, my faith has moved me to do something in order that everyone can share the resources we have on the</p>

<p>(Participant links aspects of their faith to sustainability. Ex, linked to religious documents, teachings, beliefs)</p>	<p>planet. For example, if you see the children in Africa, everything that is happening in that part of the world, I tend to pray, and I ask the Lord to give them food and water and the resources that they need. That's the way I see things. (SI03)</p> <p>I guess the sense that we're called upon to be Christ's body in the world, so if we don't do something, who is going to do it. It's not like anytime I throw a piece of trash away or recycling, 'well here I am, the body of Christ' [laughter]. Its one of those things where you start to realize that we're communal. I'm not a separate individual at the end of the day. My actions have real impact. And on other things around me. (SI07)</p> <p>Well, plain and simple, part of the social teachings of the Church, is recognising our personal responsibility for the planet, personal responsibility to take care of everything. It's very simple. It's a requirement. But if people recognise this as their job is another matter. But I've always have felt quite strongly. So, its intrinsic to Christian faith *(SI02)</p> <p>When I was a little kid, I thought my faith was being as good as I can be. Sort of walking in Jesus's footsteps. And I think that's what leads me, I truly believe, environmental concerns, are part of that. Being as good as you can be. I'm sure that Jesus isn't an environmentalist, due to the fact that he was around 2000 years ago, they didn't have the sort of processed products that we have now, right, and so to be concerned for all things and all living things is concern for the environment as a whole, its not only animals its plant life, its in your immediate environment, your larger environment, as well as the global environment. And I think we can't do that unless we have an environmental perspective on the way that we live. (SI01)</p> <p>I've always tried to recycle, I was always one of those post hippies, because I had a friend who actually went to St Ignatius and she was always very strong about that, so, you know, for a long time I've been conscious of not being... of not littering , and that was the early days when recycling was unheard of, of course, so I guess it's mainly both. You know because you want to do good for the earth, and its part of your faith to take care of the earth. That's also my personal belief too. * [SI09]</p> <p>*Aligns with Creation Care</p>
<p>Faith and sustainability are not separate (4 participants)</p>	<p>I don't make a separation. I think basically, I come to understand that that is truth. I struggled, when I was a child that was one of my big struggles with religion. I had a religious conflict when I was 10 years old. I hated the God that I was being taught. I hated that God. God sends you to hell. It was very bad in those days. I come from the priest old school. And I looked at the earth, and I said, where are the animals in all this, they</p>

<p>(Participant does not differentiate between their faith and sustainability belief, it is all part of who they are)</p>	<p>excluded animals. I struggled and struggled, and I could not love this God. Then I thought well I'm going to go to hell because I hate God. It's terrible. And no one to talk to. And now I realize that this struggle that I had is exactly what, this is what is coming together, God is in creation * (SI04)</p> <p>I would say that they aren't different for me, my faith is connected to my respect for the planet. I see it as a gift from God, and as we interact with this gift from God, when we behave in a poor way with the environment, we are showing a disrespect for our creator. I don't want to come across as a minister preaching to you, but Jesus said love your neighbour as yourself, and you can't do that by misbehaving with the environment. You can't love others and not love the environment. Maybe there was at some time you could've done that, maybe when the fields were limitless and everything, but you can't do that anymore* (SI13)</p> <p>It's all rolled up into one. I can't separate my faith from who I am. I see this when I go out to my university in how their faith... people don't even know, they've got faith. Their liberal faith, their humanist faith. And that's great. But it's a hard place to work when you're a minority and they're out spouting their doctrine and dialogue, so it's hard for me to separate that. I don't know, doing God's work on earth, working hard... It's all kind of rolled up into one. (SI11)</p> <p>I think they're just kind of related in terms of they're both just part of my worldview. I don't think I could separate it... I think the whole thing, like the gist of the Encyclical is creation was given to us to take care of, it's a gift from God, so taking care of our environment is in responding to that in the way that my faith works [SI12]*</p>
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In the questionnaire, a high percentage of respondents listed faith as part of their motivation to participate in sustainability activities, and interview participants elaborated on how their faith connected to their sustainability action. All the interview participants linked their faith to sustainability, but on different levels. At both UUCW and St. Ignatius, research participants discussed how faith motivated, or how their faith is linked to, their sustainability activity. At UUCW, most participants said their faith supported their sustainability activity, but was not the primary motivator. Strong connections to UU faith were discussed less frequently. This is

compared to St. Ignatius participants whose answers were more evenly dispersed, with most participants saying sustainability was part of their faith or that faith and sustainability were the same. This seems to suggest that St. Ignatius participants have a stronger faith connection to sustainability. At UUCW, more participants discussed their faith motivations in relation to their faith community, and at St. Ignatius, more participants discussed their faith motivations in relation to their personal faith as exemplified in the quotes above.

5.4.1 Faith as supporting their sustainability activities

More participants at UUCW discussed faith as supporting their sustainability activity than at St. Ignatius. At St. Ignatius, participants discussed that regardless of whether an individual is part of a faith community or not, they should be participating in sustainability activity. Notwithstanding this belief, they discussed faith as supporting their decisions to participate in sustainability activities. At UUCW, approximately half of the interview participants discussed their faith as supporting their sustainability activity. Most participants discussed sustainability as being part of their lives before they began attending UUCW, but that the principles within UUCW support their past and present activity. Other participants discussed how being with a group of people who are like-minded and thinking sustainably has supported their own sustainability activity. At St. Ignatius, participants discussed ‘duty as an individual’ as the primary reason for participating in sustainability activity, but that aspects of their faith support that participation, while at UUCW, most participants felt that UU principles and the UUCW community supported their sustainability activity.

UUCW participant’s connection between faith and sustainability was most frequently discussed as a supportive relationship. There were a few participants that held a strong relationship between their faith and sustainability activity, but they were in the minority. Many

participants discussed how they started attending UUCW because they agreed with what the church stood for and stayed because their personal beliefs were reflected by the church.

5.4.2 Sustainability is part of faith

There were more participants from St. Ignatius than UUCW that discussed sustainability as part of their faith. One participant from UUCW discussed the UU principles as the link between their faith and sustainability activity. There were many more St. Ignatius participants that discussed sustainability as part of their faith. One participant drew their links to sustainability from the Bible and connected those readings to the idea of equitably sharing resources. Two participants discussed trying to act through Jesus's example as their motivation to engage in sustainability activities. One participant listed sustainability as both a 'requirement' and part of the social teachings of the Catholic Church. Another participant described sustainability as both a personal sustainability and part of faith.

5.4.3 Faith and sustainability are not separate

At both St. Ignatius and UUCW, some participants discussed their faith and sustainability as not just connected, but the same. More participants at St. Ignatius discussed their faith and sustainability as not separate than at UUCW. At UUCW, there is a lot of diversity in the faith of congregation members. Only two participants discussed their faith and sustainability as not separate in comparison to four at St. Ignatius. One participant from UUCW discussed how their personal faith is nature-based and completely aligns with their sustainability activity, while the other participant discussed how their personal choices all stem from their faith, and thus sustainability choices fall under that umbrella.

At St. Ignatius, most participants discussed God when they described how their faith and sustainability activity are not separate from each other. Phrases like, “God is in creation” (SI04), “doing God’s work on earth” (SI11), and “it’s a gift from God” (SI13; SI12), were used when participants described how their faith and sustainability activity were one in the same. These participants also discussed disrespecting the creator, the Encyclical *Laudato Si*, taking care of the environment, and relationships with God. These participants linked God and creation and saw their sustainability activity as their faith. The motivation to participate in sustainability activities is inherently there for these participants

5.5 Barriers among faith and sustainability action

The amount of sustainability activity within a FC is greatly impacted by the barriers that they face. In my interviews, I asked participants if there were any barriers between their faith and their sustainability activities. The barriers participants discussed are listed below in Table 12. It should be noted that some participants did not discuss this question. Both St. Ignatius and UUCW discussed barriers, but St. Ignatius participants listed more barriers than UUCW participants.

Table 12 Barriers between faith and sustainability action

St. Ignatius	UUCW
Faith	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No barriers between faith and sustainability action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No barriers between faith and sustainability action
Organizational and institutional	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings/structures • Hierarchal structures • Politics • Lack of institutional support (top down) • Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings/structures
Personal and interpersonal	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and commitment • Priorities • Human nature • Personal ability • Politics • Attitudes and perceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and commitment • Priorities • Human nature • Controversial topics
Communication	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to information • Ability to communicate message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to information
Financial	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resources
Demographics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispersed population

In both UUCW and St. Ignatius, participants said faith was not a barrier to sustainability activity. In fact, as discussed in the previous section, these participants noted that their faith either supported, was the same, or was part of, their sustainability work. However, participants found there were barriers within their faith community. Barriers came from organizational and institutional structures, personal and interpersonal experiences, communication, and finance as shown in Table 12.

Organization and institutional barriers were particularly apparent for both St. Ignatius and UUCW in the existing church buildings. Both deal with older structures that need to be updated, which creates barriers to sustainability action. For example;

I would say that we've inherited a number of structures that are probably now outdated for being environmentally sustainable...So, I would say that there are things in our faith that we have inherited from previous decades. And that there are structures that are environmentally damaging. And St Ignatius is a building that is a poor fit for environmental sustainability. (SI13)

I have an issue right now. Our heating system, or half of it, is at the end of its life. So, there was a question of what we replace it with. And we're facing a real dilemma (UU05)

Some participants at St. Ignatius noted hierarchal structures and lack of institutional support as a barrier to sustainability activity and to the EC. The EC has worked from the bottom-up, but some participants do not believe there is support coming from the top-down. Participants discussed how current leadership within St. Ignatius has approved events and programs they have implemented, but there are barriers within these approvals. Some participants discussed how they believe there could be more support from the top, while other participants discussed how supportive they believe leadership to be. For example, participant SI04 discusses leadership as a barrier;

Oh, it's a barrier. [Leadership] has a lot of clout...He tolerates us. But he's fair. And I have to give him credit for that. But you know, he's not [100%] supportive. (SI04)

I speak in sort of general terms about St Ignatius, St Ignatius we actually have quite a few very serious problems. Not all of them do I fully understand because I've only been here 6 years, but [Clergy] was sent there to make some changes. For example, we operate that complex with no capital reserve, so if something gets busted or one of our air exchangers goes, we don't have cash to fix it. So, one of the things [Clergy] did was separating the school from the church... So now we have tuition and church contributions. So, Father has been instrumental in doing that. We wouldn't have had these lightbulbs without Father supporting this. (SI11)

Well probably if the Archbishop would incorporate the environmental issue as a place within his agenda. Right now, he's working on something called the Synod, so he's putting tougher, he's soliciting from all his churches, ideas on how the Synod could work. I don't see a prominent place for the environment. (SI06)

According to participants, there is both support and a lack of support depending on what the focus sustainability issue is. *Laudato Si* was published in 2015 and therefore new to CST. Information presented in *Laudato Si* has been slow to disseminate to the FC, possibly due to the hierarchical nature of the Catholic Church. My data would seem to indicate that likely leadership has too much going on to give direct support to everything happening in the Parish, but they could eliminate barriers and make the road smoother for sustainability work. Top-down

programming could support current sustainability work and increase overall awareness and action.

A few participants spoke about how they thought hierarchical leadership can be a barrier to trying to engage parishioners. When putting on an event, the St Ignatius EC currently (2018/19) cannot make an announcement after Mass. These participants find this a barrier to sustainability engagement.

(We communicate sustainability messages) in the basement mostly. The first and last announcement that I made for the community [leadership] technically said, 'you have to finish right now you cannot say that in here'. My community is pretty strict. So that was my first and last time. So, the way I approach people is in the basement when we have coffee and we get together as a community. That's the only way. (SI03)

Participants speculated that the reason they were restricted was due to politics. Sustainability can be considered a political issue, both regarding political affiliation and activism. Political affiliation is a barrier at St. Ignatius, which fits in both the personal and organizational barrier category. The EC promotes environmental sustainability within the church, which is both a new concept for the Church and is linked with some polarizing political issues between the Right and the Left. Due to this, some research participants feel there is not as much support for the EC in comparison to other committees. For example, several participants discussed the petition opposing the Energy East pipeline that was advertised within the Parish. Due to the politicisation of such an issue and varying opinions between the Right and the Left, the EC now has limits as to where they can advertise certain issues. For example, the Environmental Committee was asked to stop petitioning about Energy East as it was believed to be a political issue.

We got involved in the petition opposing the Energy East pipeline when that was still an issue, and we used water as a sacred gift, we used spiritual language for that. And that's

when, 'shit hit the fan' [laughter]. There was a polarization [between for and against pipeline supporters]. But actually, we got quite a lot of support. We actually got two Catholic churches involved besides our own, which is phenomenal. And we got a Unitarian Universalist church involved, they're very liberal, and the First Mennonite church... Here in our church, Catholics are so hierarchical, and especially when you get the Conservative element. (SI04)

But the petitions, I think it adds to the perception that this is a political issue, we're involving the church in a political issue, that this is not the place for it. So, it's trying to find that balance between yes, it is an important issue as a faith community, it is a moral issue, we need to talk about it. But it's how do you talk about it, and, do you only talk about those things without the other sorts of more community-based things. (SI07)

This participant points out the barriers to introducing 'controversial' sustainability issues to a traditionally Conservative religious group. There was a negative reaction among some members of the FC who disagreed with the petition or thought there was no place for such an issue in the Parish. This quote also points out that even though there was push-back, the EC was successful in including other FC's in their action.

A good point participant SI11 brought up was how political affiliation in general can be a barrier for FC members to participate in sustainability action.

People link environmental stuff with the Left, so that would be, people hear that and think uh oh. And the Left has conflated all of these issues. And now that we're in a really kind of hostile world, particularly against Catholicism, they don't understand the bigger theories and framework, and rightly so... I think the big barrier is, as soon as you start talking sustainability, you're really saying I'm a Liberal and I want to come and tell you guys that you're stupid and colloquial and misogynistic and colonial, and all that stuff. And people don't want to hear that. I hear enough of that on CBC and reading Globe and Mail. It's a very hostile, particularly being Catholic, people are very anti Catholic, and they're happy to tell you that to your face. You never could say, the stuff that CBC produces, they would never say that about Jews or Muslims, just Catholicism. So that would be a big barrier. (SI11)

In this participant's opinion, the division between the political Left and Right has turned many Catholics away from environmentalism, as they have not been provided a framework in which to approach sustainability.

Both St. Ignatius and UUCW have personal and interpersonal barriers to sustainability action. Time, commitment, personal ability, priorities and other aspects of human nature are barriers for both FCs and congregation members for participation. For example:

Time. Commitment. I think just people deciding that this is something they can and want to prioritize right now. (UU02)

All of the negative reactions were personal, and related people's ability to take on something else. It wasn't a kind of a collective reaction; it was more like an individual reaction. For example, one woman said you know, 'oh no, not one more thing', and you know, and that person has a lot of pain, for example. It's sort of like for people who are older who have a lot of pain, its inconceivable...But, the other truth is that that generation of people were sustainable without even calling it that. And so that person who said that, I was thinking to myself, 'that's an interesting reaction that doesn't surprise me', and yet that would be a person who probably never buys plastic cutlery and 'royale chinet' or whatever they call that stuff, those paper dishes. So, all the reactions that were negative I heard had to do with people's limitations of some kind. Personal limitations. (SI02)

You see the issues filtered through human nature, human thought, priorities, preoccupations. So, the issue is always, I mean you're asking how we integrate it, that's the issue with other people. How can people integrate a question about their environmental footprint into the ways they live their lives, where they live, how do they get around. (UU05)

Attitudes and perceptions can be a barrier at St. Ignatius. Another barrier some participants discussed was that they thought more could be done within the church. The barriers research participants discussed were more on a personal level, or were ideas brought forth. Generally, it was the level of commitment individuals could or could not bring to sustainability action.

There are barriers because people have erected them. Because they see themselves as rulers of the earth. Entitlement, those are the barriers. And when you have a rigid faith like that, there will be barriers, they're threatened by their faith. (SI04)

Well it's frustrating when our church won't be as conscientious or as active as we'd like it to be. It's not putting its money where its mouth is. We waste a lot of energy and materials. And that is a barrier, that is frustrating. (UU11/12)

The Parish hall at Coffee Time is the main stage for the EC. The restrictions on this in comparison to other ministries who advertise fundraising events and other social justice campaigns during announcements in Mass has presented barriers to the EC to membership and event recruitment. UUCW does not face the same barriers. However, UUCW sometimes finds it difficult sharing information.

In terms of getting involved with the congregation directly, a bit more information, easily accessible information. [...] I like to read up on things and think about them before I put myself out there. So, having something that I could read on my own (UU08)

I think more could be done in terms of sharing information. As younger people become involved in the church there's more things happening on Facebook or social media. I think... some people say if you want people to hear your message you have to say it 7 times in I don't know how many different ways, in any way you can think of. So, if they're advertising the yard sale for example, they put it in the newsletter, there's a weekly email, they put up posters everywhere, they announce it at Sunday service, so they cover every possible way... I guess if information was more available, more people would, so you get, some things get publicised and attended and other things don't. And there's some people who seem to never get the message, and others are constantly tuned in. The only thing I can think of is more different ways to share the message I guess. (UU06)

Both UUCW and St. Ignatius face financial barriers in trying to initiate their sustainability activities.

The cheapest option [heating] is natural gas. There are alternatives, but they're much more expensive. And the question is can we ... well one thing is to price in the cost ... the extra of carbon and see what that does to the calculation (UU05)

People try to minimize the problem, the environment, money is over environment I would say. If the only way I can get a job, a stable job, is working in the mining company, a gas company. (SI03)

Other barriers within the church extend to debating what should be prioritized, who is available to volunteer, and how will it be funded. Ultimately, no one said their faith itself was a barrier to environmental engagement, but more the barriers imposed by humans or human nature within the faith community.

5.6 Discussion

In this chapter, I presented the data related to the connections between faith and sustainability activity within the congregations. To summarize, in interviews participants discussed their personal definition of sustainability. These definitions aligned with ‘taking care of the earth’, and aspects related to the environment. Data in chapter 5 indicated that St. Ignatius participants exhibited strong relationships between their faith and sustainability activity. Participant’s discussed a wide variety of barriers to sustainability action within the FC, including barriers to communication, overcoming attitudes and perceptions, and political divisiveness. UUCW participants had a weaker relationship between their faith and sustainability activity. There were fewer barriers to sustainability action at UUCW than St. Ignatius, and both faced barriers such as lack of financial resources and personal obstacles such as time and commitment.

St. Ignatius participants discussed topics such as their duty to protect the earth, caring for creation, and CST when connecting their faith to sustainability. Discussions of Creation Care shows that Biblical interpretations of caring for God’s creation (Kearns, 1996; Ellingson *et al.*, 2012) are effective motivators connecting faith and sustainability. *Laudato Si* focuses on ‘Care for Our Common Home’, which aligns with ‘caring for creation’ (Johnston, 2013; Kearns, 1996;

Ellingson *et al.*, 2012; O'Brien & Shannon, 2016), which proved to be an important reference for several St. Ignatius participants. *Laudato Si* focused on the concept of an integral ecology (Francis, 2015) which considers and links human and social concerns within the environmental crisis. However, participants mostly focused on the environmental aspect, which reflects what some academics (e.g. Kidwell *et al.*, 2018; Li *et al.*, 2016) are concentrating on. This is also reflected in the committees and activity available in St. Ignatius. For example, social justice is important in St. Ignatius and several committees focus on related issues, but the EC is fragmented from other committees with each focusing on their topic. While this is practical and I believe makes sense for organizational purposes, I did not document from observation or interviews many instances of committees partnering to organize an activity or advocate for a cause.

UUCW participants discussed topics such as the 7th principle, valuing nature, and FC support when discussing faith and sustainability. All UUCW participants had strong personal connections to sustainability, but only some revealed the same connection between their UU faith and sustainability. Technically, the UU faith follows the belief in God as a unity and universal salvation (Bailey, 2013; Hostler, 1981; McKanan, 2012), but this belief is not required to be welcome in the FC. To be welcome in the FC, members must follow and share the UU principles. As a result, UUCW members have diverse faith backgrounds. The seventh principle within Unitarian Universalism was considered the 'environmental' principle by most participants, which reads "respect for the inter-dependent web of all existence of which we are part" (Brandenburg, 2007; Morales, 2012). This principle connects UUCW participants to sustainability and also confirms several participants' statements indicating that congregation members are generally like-minded. Most participants joined their UUCW community because

the principles supported their personal thoughts, but their connections to sustainability were already there. Some made connections between their faith and sustainability once they were in the community, and all felt supported by their community, but most motivations came from outside the FC.

Participants from both St. Ignatius and UUCW faced barriers to sustainability engagement and some of these were faith oriented. As stated, not one participant thought their faith was a barrier to sustainability activity. Barriers were human based, such as changing priorities across congregations, and imposed structures and institutions that are slow to change. St. Ignatius faced more barriers than UUCW. The environmental aspect of *Laudato Si* was highly relevant for St. Ignatius because as O'Brien & Shannon (2016) notes the environment has historically been lacking in CST, which also reflects why it is difficult to implement new sustainability activity within the parish. The EC formed in 2006, and *Laudato Si* was published in 2015. While the EC had been working on sustainability activity in St. Ignatius prior to 2015, it wasn't until 2015 that the environment was officially recognized within CST. Now that integral ecology and caring for creation is recognized within the Magisterium, it can be recognized at the congregational level and can provide links for more individuals between their faith and sustainability activity. However, change can be slow, and this is still mirrored in St. Ignatius. This reflects the study by Kidwell *et al.* (2018) where they noted slow change when educating a large group within a FC, but with the added layer of recent recognition by the teaching authority.

No participant discussed resistance to *Laudato Si*, however, participants noted some resistance to some EC work. In the U.S. context, *Laudato Si* is not universally known or discussed (Ives & Kidwell, 2019), and some Conservative Catholics resist Pope Francis's message (Li *et al.*, 2016). Although St. Ignatius participants held strong connections between

their faith and sustainability, these connections are not necessarily shared by the broader Parish population. Participants also noted some tension and barriers to sustainability based on political affiliation. This is reflected in Li *et al.*, (2016) where political views within the U.S. played a strong role in determining individual support for *Laudato Si*, and some Conservative Catholics, “not only resisted the message but defended their pre-existing beliefs by devaluing the Pope’s credibility on climate change” (pg. 377). While St. Ignatius participants support sustainability activity, they also observed barriers within the Parish due to political affiliation. Li *et al.* (2016) confirms that political affiliation does play a role in accepting and supporting Creation Care.

Participants at St. Ignatius indicated a strong relationship between their faith and sustainability, but this relationship is not enough to overcome some barriers to action on sustainability. This is perhaps in part due to the emphasis on sustainability being relatively new for Catholic institutions, as reflected by *Laudato Si* only being published in 2015. At UUCW, participants did not have as strong connections between their faith and sustainability but maintained strong connections to sustainability. To reiterate, Smith (1979) noted that a faith community is an expression of the personal faith of the people of that community. This is evident in both St. Ignatius and UUCW and the connections between faith and sustainability.

Both St. Ignatius and UUCW participants made connections to sustainability through a shared meaning (Bomburg & Hague, 2018) specific to their FC. For example, Creation Care, *Laudato Si*, and the 7th Principle provided FC members a guide, or shared narrative (Bomburg & Hague, 2018) to connect faith and sustainability. Although a shared narrative is present and available in both FCs, UUCW’s 7th principle is universally accepted among Unitarian Universalists, while Creation Care is not universally accepted among Catholics. The relationship

to sustainability is present in St. Ignatius, but not omnipresent in the FC. This is in comparison to UUCW, where the 7th principle provides a universal relationship to sustainability.

CHAPTER 6: LEARNING OUTCOMES, OPPORTUNITIES AND ACTION

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss participant's sustainability learning outcomes, opportunities for learning within faith communities, and the social action that has occurred through learning. Participants in both UUCW and St. Ignatius exhibited a range of sustainability learning outcomes. I sought to find out what was happening in faith communities regarding sustainability activity and behaviour, and as such, individuals discussed a variety of topics, such as gardening, sustainable purchasing, and waste reduction, as well as a variety of other experiences. As outlined in chapter two, I used a transformative learning lens, and to organize the data, used the parent themes of instrumental and communicative learning, and looked for transformative outcomes.

6.2 Learning Outcomes

Results indicate instrumental learning outcomes occurred in the forms of knowledge, skills and cognitive understanding. Communicative learning outcomes included insight into one's own values and interests, insight into other's values and interests, and insight into shared values and interests of research participants in relation to sustainability. Some learning outcomes occurred simultaneously. For example, participants discussed learning waste management knowledge and skills, but also gaining insights into others' values and interests.

Learning outcomes in general were more frequent and widespread across participants in UUCW than in St. Ignatius. There are several different factors that lead to this, which are discussed in the barriers section in Chapter five. For example, it is more difficult at St. Ignatius

to communicate sustainability messages and host events than at UUCW, and therefore there are less learning opportunities available.

6.2.1 Instrumental Learning

This following section will discuss instrumental learning outcomes of the results of UUCW and St. Ignatius as outlined in Table 13. The parent themes under instrumental learning were drawn from the literature, and the sub-themes that occur were grounded in the data. Under instrumental learning, knowledge enhancement was the most frequent and universal learning outcome. For example, participants described acquiring information on waste management, environmental issues, and church activity. Participants enhanced their knowledge in a variety of areas, but the amount and depth of knowledge they acquired was varied. Cognitive understanding was the next most frequent instrumental learning outcome, and skills the least frequent instrumental learning outcome

Table 13 Instrumental learning outcomes

Instrumental Learning Outcomes	
Knowledge enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable products • Environmental issues (e.g., water issues, climate change, etc.) • Waste management (e.g., recycling, compost, reuse, sorting options, available programs, commercial composting, etc.) • <i>Laudato Si</i> • Sustainable living: personal definitions of sustainability, knowledge of sustainability practices • Permaculture practices • Environmental programs available within Winnipeg (e.g., Fruit Share, CSAs, Peg City Car Coop, community gardening)
New Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste reduction skills (e.g., how to compost, recycle, reuse) • Energy reduction skills (e.g., lightbulb replacement, heating, travel)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How to communicate environmental issues to a specific group (e.g., speaking with small groups, advertising) • Community organization (e.g., how to run an event/workshop) • Purchasing skills (e.g., where to find sustainable products and what to purchase)
Improved Cognitive Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts of waste: impacts of landfills, of poor sorting, of plastics • Impacts of transportation • Purchasing impacts: impacts of buying local, impacts of purchasing sustainable products • Impacts media has on the public: marketing of products, purchasing choices • Economic impacts: how it impacts choices within the church and what can be done, impacts on personal choices (for sustainability) • General understanding of sustainability
Community Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human dynamics within a community • Impacts of joining together as a group, what can be accomplished, communal response to a problem • Further available opportunities from participating in community work, how it expands

6.2.1.1 Knowledge enhancement

Participants gained new knowledge in a number of areas, such as waste management, information from *Laudato Si*, and available sustainability programming in Winnipeg. Generally, participants in both St. Ignatius and UUCW expanded their knowledge of recycling, composting and reusing items. For example, the Environment Committee at St Ignatius implemented a waste policy and a waste management system, which included recycling and compost waste streams and using reusable cups and plates instead of Styrofoam. Through communication,

reinforcement, and hands-on application, participants learned about the new waste management system, including the location of the waste bins in the church, what items are compostable/recyclable, and how to sort the waste. Other knowledge outcomes that participants noted included, *waste sorting options, diversion programs available within Winnipeg, commercial composting, at-home composting, and sorting*. For example:

What's compostable, what you can divert from the landfill, and certainly when you are purchasing material in your home environment. My spouse and I we kind of split up the shopping, and I will look at stuff a little more closely when I'm buying it. You know, can I recycle the container, things like that. (SI08)

Directly, this environmental committee, what they've done specifically in terms of their guidelines for recycling and using compostable and biodegradable cups and things like that. I can't think of what all their guidelines are, the ones that hit me were the ones that affected our dinner. (SI12)

Participants discussed learning about a variety of environmental issues in their faith community. Participants had different learning experiences depending on what activity a participant attended, or who they interacted with in their faith community. Participants discussed issues on *waste, water, consumption, food, climate change, and pipelines*, among other topics. In many instances, a participant would attend an event or discuss a topic with a fellow FC member and learn a little bit more on their topic of interest. For example, participant UU03 discussed learning about issues with Shoal Lake and the City of Winnipeg through the Social Justice Committee in the FC, and the action that resulted:

I think it's expanded my awareness and my knowledge. Like water, the importance valuing that we can drink clean water. A good example, maybe one of the best examples in the last couple years, has been the water walk that we took. Shoal Lake 40, First Nations Treaty Land. Where we get our water, where the city gets our water. That was brought to our attention really forcefully a couple of summers ago by the Social Justice Committee, and in many ways, in The Communicator and Sunday morning during announcements. It was more active and more vocal and became more organized together with other faith communities and other organizations (UU03)

Related to water pollution, participants also learned new information on *sustainable products* that do not pollute waterways. For example:

They introduced some different things that I hadn't thought about. Both [omit] as well as St Ignatius, introduced a lot of stuff with regards to water. They were promoting, at St Ignatius, the use of this organic product that's made in our global south, I can't remember what it's called but its these little brown balls that's used to clean clothing. And I actually had experience with that because in El Salvador that's what they used, so it's very interesting [...] (SI01)

Other issues were discussed, such as pipelines and electromagnetic radiation. For example:

For example, in our meetings I learned things about pipelines and how they will affect the north. All those things about pipelines, and oil, there are so many issues they are bringing to the meetings, I have learned that. (SI03)

The only thing in my case would be learning about the hypothesis of the effects of electromagnetic radiation. Which was brought up by another member in the committee who was very into that literature. And making representations to parliament and that kind of thing. (UU05)

Several participants discussed *gardening and food* learning outcomes. Participants discussed learning about local food sources, sustainable sources, and learning about gardening options. This was a more popular learning outcome in UUCW than St. Ignatius. UUCW had a Sunday service where a speaker came to talk about permaculture, and then held a talk on permaculture after the service. Participants learned what permaculture is and what the benefits are. Participants strictly spoke about enhancing knowledge. One participant spoke of the talk and how they wanted to learn more (UU13). However, this was a very recent event and action could be taken in the future.

This extends to participants discussing sustainable living. Participants discussed how they found out about sustainability programs within their FC. For example

So, the point about Fruit Share is that I found out about it through the church. I found out about Car Co-op through the church. So, it hasn't necessarily taught me that oh, you should forage for food in order to reduce the distances that stuff gets trucked, it hasn't taught me that, but it's given me another option to do that. (UU09)

I tried composting at home but it didn't work out too well – I didn't have the proper containers, didn't do the necessary work with the composter in my yard. So, when I heard from a friend that there was a company that was starting a door to door composting program I checked into it. It's easy and until the city decides (if ever) to run the program like recycling I'll continue with the company. (SI09)

These participants enhanced their knowledge of what resources were available to them.

Knowledge enhancement was one of the most frequently discussed instrumental learning outcomes.

6.2.1.2 New Skills

The most frequent new skill learned was in relation to waste management. Knowledge and skills were often intertwined when participants discussed learning about waste management in their FC. Participants in both UUCW and St. Ignatius expanded their knowledge and skills.

Waste management skills discussed include *waste sorting skills, general compost and recycling, and how to compost at home*. For example:

I'm learning about how to recycle properly and making sure I'm putting things where they're supposed to go. (SI03)

I mean for composting for example, I attended a workshop and learned about that through there. I've also learned more and learned about resources for reading about environmental issues and possible ways in which we could have a more sustainable economy. (UU06)

Ya, I would say that just that example of what you can compost. Just as a specific example, paper napkins. Before I got involved, I was putting them in the garbage waste. And then I found that it could be composted. There's an example. So, now none of my paper goes there. You look at the egg cartons. Not the ones made out of Styrofoam, the other ones. They make good compost too, which I never knew before. Those are the types of things. So, and now, I will probably look more closely when I am purchasing stuff to

see whether the packaging minimal, can it be recycled or composted, I'm much more conscious of those things. (SI08)

Participants discussed improving their waste management abilities by introducing more sorting options to an *at-home waste routine* and learning more about *larger scale composting*. For example:

Well I got the idea from somebody of these green buckets kept in the house for composting, bits and pieces of vegetables and fruit go in there, so I don't have to run out everyday to run out to the bin. So, I found a process, so I got that tip from someone else in the community. (SI06)

We've been doing composting, the church has, sort of a large bin kind of composting. And I think I've learned some things about composting that I didn't know before. (UU04)

There's a difference between just regular composting and large-scale composting. I can't remember the word they used for it. But some industrial composting. Which just means large scale. So, I think that they just chop things up really finely and make sure that the layering is right, the brown green. (SI01)

A few participants noted they started composting at home after learning about it in their faith community. Many individuals were already aware of how to recycle, but most participants improved their skill and knowledge, such as more information on what items can and cannot be recycled.

Several participants discussed learning about sustainable *purchasing skills*, such as *choosing sustainable products*, something they introduced into their daily lives. Some individuals discovered a sustainable product through their faith community and implemented its use in their day to day lives. For example, participant SI01 discussed acquiring knowledge about soap nuts, and learning to identify more biodegradable products. Another participant discussed improving purchasing choices for toys. For example:

A really big thing that I find has had an impact, is the sorts of toys and choices we're making in terms of our kids. Oh, my goodness, so much plastic garbage. So many people have so much plastic garbage. So, if we're going to have plastic toys its going to be second hand. I'm not buying that, we're not buying that, in terms of talking to the kid's grandparents, in terms of what we should be getting them. (UU08)

Communication skills were discussed by several participants. Participants discussed the importance of communicating a clear message to a group when advocating for sustainability, and the importance of communication within a group dynamic. For example:

I have been inspired by others at the church who communicate well and are good models of how to create change at a community level. I never experienced the workings of a group. I was always sort of on my own. I'm inspired by how well people put together their thoughts and compose letters and sermons on issues. And just the networking involved. I think I've learned quite a bit about that, how important it is. Not just to do things on your own, but to get involved in community. (UU01)

A participant also learned both how to compost through a workshop, but also how to run a workshop. For example:

I suppose [omit] held a lot of workshops in house for the different programs run within the church, the Knights of Columbus is one, and there's about 20 others, and she wanted to educate each. So, I would attend, and I would learn through simply her example, and how to run a workshop, and what needs to be covered during these workshops. If I should ever be required to do one then I would know just through watching. (SI06)

While acquiring new skills did not occur as frequently as knowledge enhancement, the skills acquired by participants were important learning outcomes.

6.2.1.3 Improved Cognitive Understanding

Participants improved a range of sustainability related cognitive understandings. Cognitive understanding refers to making links between knowledge, for example, cause and effect relationships. Many participants discussed the impacts of personal choices, such as those related to the impacts of waste, purchasing impacts, and lifestyle choices.

Participants who improved their understanding of the impacts of waste became aware of the cause and effect relationship between their personal sorting choices and the impacts of landfills, such as *understanding the impacts of waste in landfills, impacts of improper waste sorting, and disposables*. For example, participant SI08 discussed the negative *impacts of landfills*:

I've learned a lot because you always can learn, you know I knew something of it, but in terms of getting to know more specifically like you know what are the real impacts of stuff that goes to the landfill, leaching, that kind of stuff. Lot of those things I didn't know. So yes, it increased my knowledge what happens when we don't recycle, what happens when we do recycle. (SI08)

Some participants also discussed how they have become more vocal about sustainability. For example:

Like we've always done compost, we've always recycled, so not from that perspective. But um, I guess I've become a bit more reverent perhaps, which is, you know, I don't know what you'd call it exactly, it's a change (SI07)

I don't let anybody off the hook now when I see them behaving badly. I mean, at one time I wouldn't care, but I do. I direct people's attention to the fact that they've, you know, dropped that over there [reference to littering], or done something stupid. (SI06)

These participants increased their understanding of the risks and impacts of waste. This participant reflected on the *cause and effect relationship* between the FC and the compost program in the FC and was shocked by the impact the compost program had on her faith community. This participant stated,

I think what has changed for me is realizing that it's possible to tap into a community and get it changed in this area. I would've said before this experience is that there's no way you get people on board with it, I thought. Because usually churches are pretty conservative and the people that are there, in my experience, in my humble experience, less likely to make changes, and yet, somebody has really done it. And I'm intrigued by that. I don't know who. But I know what it takes to make that kind of change in a conservative

community. So, I'm quite intrigued by that... Its like, 'wow, look at you with the compost bin at the curb, how did you do that?' So, I've been intrigued by that. (SI02)

Several participants discussed risks and impacts of purchasing choices.

Participant SI01 also reflected upon that knowledge and gained insight into the *impacts of personal actions*. Research participants discussed different cognitive understandings of *purchasing choices* they had made. For example:

The more you start adapting your knowledge, adapting your behaviours with your new-found knowledge. Even small things. Like when you're buying soap. I use hand soap. It's in bars. I'm not using tubs when you squirt. They might think it's all sanitized, but the health department has nothing to do with the health of our earth, they are totally out of sync with any knowledge. So instead of having plastic pumps, I just realized a bar of soap is the best way to go. All of a sudden it dawned on me, and I've been using bar soap but now I know why I'm using it. (SI04)

It affected the way we reared our children, and our choices in definitely always our choices in entertainment, right, so trying not to allow them to buy all the plastic toys, we never went to McDonalds, and we never got all those stupid plastic toys we chose wooden toys for the most part. (SI01)

This participant made the decision to change her purchasing habits based on new information she learned, then began linking this information to other information. Participants also discussed *cause and effect relationships* of other daily choices, such as the use of plastic bags and the impacts they have on the earth. For example:

It's just one issue, but its one that we see everyday, we touch it all the time. When I grew up we didn't have plastic everywhere, we managed to live on glass. It was 1 % of what it is now. Plastic bottles, they were glass. When I was young it was a world of glass. I know it doesn't have to be like that. (SI12)

Participants also discussed improving their *general knowledge and understanding of sustainability* by making links between knowledge and gaining further insights into the impacts of sustainability choices. Many participants discussed how their FC has strengthened their

relationship with sustainability. For example, participant UU02 discussed how experience within the FC both reinforces, encourages and improves their understanding of sustainability,

I think it strengthens more, I believe in sustainability even more I think. I think when you have more and more people joining you, and that feeling that we're in this together, it sort of just emboldens you even more, like being able to go forward even more [...] I think its sort of... it kind of just confirms that, and it gives me a safe place to express that side of me. And to know that you're welcome. So definitely, there's always that strength in numbers, which is great. (UU02)

Another participant spoke of how participating in their FC increased their overall consciousness of sustainability. For example,

I'm very conscious all the time, like if I'm in a car, I'm thinking about the fuel that I'm using. We have a Prius, so I'm thinking about the fuel we're using or not using at any moment [laughter]. And constantly, when I see waste, there's so much waste everywhere around us, and I'm very conscious (UU11)

Most participants initially learned about sustainability outside of their FC, but they honed this understanding within their FC through interactions with other FC members and attending church activities.

6.2.1.4 Community Work

Some participants learned about various aspects of community work through their FC, such as human dynamics, impacts of group work, and available opportunities within community work. For example, participants discussed how they found certain difficulties in community work:

And you certainly become aware of political processes and the sorts of things that stand in the way, and so on. So, you get to reflect a lot more on the economics of doing something, because that's often a big barrier. Like doing the right thing with Winnipeg sewage, expensive sewage treatment conversions and so on. And you keep thinking of, ok, how can I, how can this be reconciled with the other priorities that councillors have to deal with, or provincial politicians. Or there's always a certain level of ignorance, so the question is how

do you educate, how do you deal with that, how can you challenge the assumptions that are made in the public forum. (UU05)

How hard it is to shape behaviours. And to act collectively. It's a lot of work, and to get people over to your side, let alone to open up their wallets to give you money, is a lot of work. (SI11)

Another participant discussed learning about the human dynamics of community work:

I think maybe not always about sustainability, but even just human dynamics. Sociology is part of it. I think there's always an opportunity for learning in every situation. So, I think that it's nice to kind of see that. And also people, like even with volunteering, the people that you're helping, there's a certain kind of connection that you make with them. And they appreciate it. Especially when they're not expecting it. (UU02)

Community work was the least discussed instrumental learning outcome but is important for organizational purposes and committee work.

6.2.2 Communicative Learning

Communicative learning within this research includes insight into one's own values and interests, insight into other's values and interests, and insight into shared values and interests of research participants in relation to sustainability. These parent themes under communicative learning were taken from the literature, and the sub-themes emerged from the data. Instrumental learning was more prominent in both cases than communicative learning. Communicative learning was more prominent in UUCW than in St. Ignatius. This could be because there are more opportunities for participants in UUCW to develop insights and communicate with other FC members on sustainability topics.

Table 14 Communicative Learning Outcomes

Communicative Learning Outcomes	
Insights into one's own values and interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding of sustainability• Personal attitudes towards environmental issues (e.g., Water, climate change)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection on past and present choices (how values and interests have changed) • Insight into personal connections between faith and sustainability
Insights into other's values and interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insight into other's interests/connections to sustainability or an environmental issue • Better understanding of others motivations/ level of sustainability engagement (e. g., Varying abilities) • Effects of FC activity on FC members • How others are applying sustainability outside the home or workplace
Insights into shared values and interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norms within the FC • Role of FC and the environment • Shared planet • Role of decision making within a family

6.2.2.1 *Insight into one's own values and interests*

Insight into one's own values and interests was the most frequent communicative learning outcome. Understanding and reflecting on one's own values, interests and beliefs added to the overall learning experiences of some participants. Participants who discussed such learning outcomes described learning encounters where they reflected on a topic they learned through communication, leading to a deeper understanding of their own personal value or interest regarding that topic. For example, some participants reflected upon the role of sustainability in their day to day lives or their personal values related to an environmental issue as revealed for participants UU09 and SI07 in the following quotes:

I started becoming more aware of sustainability issues as a young adult. I had been a vegetarian since age 17, but more for animal welfare issues than for environmental issues. I heard about some environmental issues in University, but it wasn't really until I visited Mali, in West Africa, and then lived in Malawi, in Southern Africa, that I became really engaged in environmental issues. Then as I found friends as an adult, they were often environmentally-friendly folks, so we reinforced each other's values and behaviour. (UU09)

Well not even that its so hard to pin down, but I think that even now... I used to think, 'oh I'm doing my bit for the environment, I'm recycling this plastic bottle', and now I've come to realize it's all, I don't want to say it's a hoax, but I'm really tired...like over at Starbucks they have these plastic... this ethos water or something ridiculous, if you buy this bottle.. 5 cents is going to be donated to I don't know what wonderful charity. So, I'm really tired of things that are called 'sustainable' that's like the total opposite of it. Sustainability to me at this point is to remove any kind of corporate or... I don't want it tied in to any kind of marketing, I don't want it tied to any image, I think it has to go back to how do you live your day to day life. And for me it really means, if I want to live this way, there's nothing special about me, there's nothing special about the fact that I live in North America, I want to live in a way that everyone can live this way. (SI07)

Discussion in the interviews, as well as reflecting upon varying interactions participants had, allowed participants to understand the meaning these issues had in their lives, and how their actions reflect those values. All in all, communication within the church, either from an activity or through informal conversations, opened participants to sustainability issues and required them to assess their own personal insights into those issues.

Participants also reflected on their values when communicating with groups within the church. It was clear from the data that groups such as the Green Action Committee opened some participants up to new ideas of sustainability action. For example:

I have been inspired by others at the church who communicate well and are good models of how to create change at a community level. I never experienced the workings of a group. I was always sort of on my own. I'm inspired by how well people put together their thoughts and compose letters and sermons on issues. And just the networking involved. I think I've learned quite a bit about that, how important it is. Not just to do things on your own, but to get involved in community. (UU01)

Maybe just the fact that everybody supports the concept. And supports you if you express a desire to do more of that, or if you're trying to carpool more, or walk more, take the bus more... it essentially is the fact that everybody is aware, and you don't feel like you're a pariah. So, you feel supported, so I think a little more gets accomplished. (UU03)

By being part of their FC and feeling supported in their sustainability work, these participants were able to reflect on their own sustainability values and encouragement.

Some participants discussed insights into their personal attitudes towards sustainability issues or lifestyle choices. For example:

You recognize in whatever context you find yourself, that you want to live consistent with your own principles and so on. And since part of our activities is in a faith community, and the Green Action Committee within that faith community, I would say there's a certain realization that your life should be consistent with that. You know, practice what you preach [laughter]. (UU05)

Ya, it was a journey. I think that I started feeling that way probably in my early 20s. I don't think I was particularly aware of environmental issues when I was growing up, that's hugely contrasted with my kids who have grown up vegetarian, and trying hard to keep things balanced. My older daughter is a little extreme, 'I'm not coming home because that would require me to take a plane', like, get on that plane! 'Ok mommy'. [laughter]. True story. But I would never have thought of that, that would never have crossed my mind, that oh, I shouldn't take a plane. I've reduced the amount of travel I do, which is the hardest thing to reduce, but I've reduced the amount of travel I do because I don't think that travel is particularly, like the travel we do now a days, I don't think is very sustainable. So, there's that. (UU09)

Several participants discussed learning outcomes related to links between faith and sustainability. Participants discussed either *becoming aware* of the link between their faith and sustainability or *increasing their understanding* of the link between their faith and sustainability. It was more common for participants in St. Ignatius to discuss gaining an understanding of the link between their personal faith and sustainability, and more common for participants in UUCW to increase their understanding of the link between their personal faith and sustainability. However, some participants in St. Ignatius also increased their understanding of the link between their personal faith and sustainability.

Laudato Si was an important document for several St. Ignatius participants. Several discussed *Laudato Si* as validating their understanding of the link between faith and sustainability, and as an important document for other Catholics to read and make their own

connections. Also, *Laudato Si* provided the perspective of connecting Catholicism to caring for the environment, which is sometimes lacking, according to participants.

I'm very heartened by, you know, I mean the famous thing for Catholics is Pope Francis's *Laudato Si*. You know, that's I'm glad that it's reflected officially in the Church, and it's heartening to me that it is officially. I don't know how well it's promoted necessarily, but a lot of people point to it as kind of a game changing moment [...] (SI07)

Some participants also discussed strengthening their connections between their faith and sustainability over time. For example, participant UU10 spoke of increasing understanding of this principle over time:

It's become more of, if I am a human being in this ecosystem, and if I truly believe these things that are a part of this community, our seventh principle is the interdependent web of all existence, which tends to be the environmental one, but to me that also means human beings, that what happens to you is just as important as what happens to me, which is where intersectionality comes in. Where we can't have conversations about environmentalism if we're not talking about how we treat those people who live in poverty. But it has very much become to me over the years a moral responsibility that has to be codified in our ethics, but also in, literally my identity as a person, as a thinking being, as someone who has power over other species and lifeforms. What does that power and balance mean, what are my responsibilities, so it has gone from something that was just over here into from tip to tail, including the thought processes, including the feelings, and watching how it plays out in my own children, how it plays out in that generation. (UU10)

As some participants spent more time reflecting in their FC, they became more deeply connected to sustainability through their faith. This is particularly relevant in UUCW with sustainability being considered within the seven principles. Links participants made between their faith and sustainability, as discussed in Chapter 5, enhanced some participants learning experiences.

6.2.2.2 *Insight into other's values and interests*

Participant's discussed gaining insight into other's values and interests, such as insight into other's connections to sustainability, understandings of others' motivations, and how others

are applying sustainability. Participants discussed gaining insight into other's values and interests, such as friends and family members, members of their faith community, and their perception of the general public. For example, insights into other's values and priorities with waste:

She belonged to some social justice type groups, not in the church, but outside, she was very political and she just made me aware of some things. The problem of littering for one. In my younger days, I didn't really think too much about. I guess the more I learned either from her or just as I got older, the more sustainability became something I was more interested in and wanted to do more (like recycling, composting) (SI09)

Some participants also reflected on why some individuals were not participating in the sustainability behaviour they believed they should be. A few participants reflected on varying abilities of people and where these individuals had to prioritize their actions. For example, some individuals who had difficulty with movement did not participate in recycling or compost. Unnecessary movement, getting up and down in a chair, walking over to the waste management system, was very difficult. Some of these individuals chose not to participate in the waste management program because of these obstacles. This kind of reflection made research participants more understanding and aware choices other individuals make regarding sustainability. This idea extends to how research participants perceived what other faith community member's interests in the church were. Based on discussion with others and observing what other members were participating in within the church, participants discussed being aware of where value was placed for those individuals.

But at the same time some of the stuff that gets labelled as wasteful is also ways that the culture is helping people who have different abilities. So, I remember this meme that went around awhile ago where someone was making fun of pre-peeled oranges in a plastic container in Whole Foods, or something. And the people I know who are disabled were like, but that's the only way I can eat an orange [...]. Tell me what led you to this so I can learn a bigger perspective than my own. Like when I hear people say, stop mocking

the oranges in the plastic containers because that's the only way I can eat an orange. Holy cow! My mind just got bigger. (UU10)

Some individuals chose not to participate in the waste management program because of similar obstacles, as discussed in a previous quote from participant SI02. This kind of reflection made research participants more understanding and aware of choices other individuals and the barriers to learning others face.

Participants also indicated that they reflect on other's values by comparing their personal values to others. Sometimes participants commended the interests and efforts of others. However, in most instances' participants indicated frustration to what they believed are the values of the general public, or sometimes others in their FC, were in relation to sustainability. For example, SI11 discussed how through experiences and speaking with others, he gained an understanding of other's values,

People don't want to change. People don't want to pay. At first, they said, oh well as the old bulbs burn out we'll just replace them. We have these old bulbs and we will use them. I said no, we're throwing them out. The burn out rate is less than a ¼ of a percent, it's just astonishing, but actually trying to get people to understand that is very difficult. (SI11)

Teacher friends of mine were angry to have to pay for recycling because they believed that they were not paying for garbage disposal. They had no idea of where the dump was and how it functioned. They did not even understand what they were paying taxes for...and these were educated people. People around me threw out perfectly good items because their families no longer needed them. When I explained that they could pass it on or donate it they replied with too much effort. I am disgusted by this attitude. Their ignorance continued to point of discussion that ultimately lent itself to paranoia about using an object that had another life and not knowing where it had been, or wanting to provide all new for their children. (SI01)

Many participants discussed observing what other people were doing within their FC, however, some participants started to understand and reflect on their observations and gained insight into others' values and interests.

6.2.2.3 *Insights into shared values and interests*

Shared values and interests were relevant because of the shared attitudes of the faith community. Surprisingly, this was the least discussed communicative learning outcome. I had expected this category to be discussed by most participants, but it was only discussed by a few in each case study. The shared values and interests that were discussed were those of their FC, or shared family values.

Some participants also discussed *shared values and interests* that extend from participating in church activity. Through observations and discussions with others, some participants gained insight into the general shared sustainability interests of the faith community. Observing church activity made some participants more aware of their own community, as well critical of it. Church activity elicited learning about the successes and difficulties of engaging a faith community in pro-environmental behaviour

6.2.2.4 *Connections between instrumental and communicative learning*

Instrumental and communicative learning also overlapped in many instances. For example, learning new information sometimes intertwined with communicating and gaining insights into values and interests. For example, a participant learning about waste management enhanced their knowledge but also gained insight into their own values and interests regarding waste. Many participants seemed to have an integrated and multi-faceted learning experience, especially since the topics they discussed were learned over time. A learning outcome didn't necessarily occur after one significant event, but through various individual experiences, such as through discussion, hands-on application, and research. For example, in the quote below the participant shows enhancing knowledge and gaining insight into others' values and interests:

I think I just heard so much about the environment from all avenues, from the media, from Al Gore's famous movie, being part of the Environment Committee itself. Information poured into me, whether I wanted it to or not. I often think though, how is it that someone can say, 'oh I don't know anything about that', when it's so pervasive. How can you avoid, you now, when you see written little blurbs everywhere. I don't know how can you escape being environmentally conscious? That was me. I was driven to it. (SI06)

There are a number of documented experiences such as these where participants have a learning outcome that is both an instrumental and communicative outcome.

6.3 Transformative Learning

I found little evidence of transformative learning outcomes for individuals within the faith communities. All individuals I interviewed were already in some way engaging in sustainability behaviour or had their own understanding of sustainability and I found no great shifts in their thinking or meaning perspectives, although there were changes in behaviour. Some understood sustainability growing up, and activities and encounters in their adulthood enhanced that understanding. It was difficult to flush out where, or if, transformative learning occurred in these individuals. Some could not recall how they first started thinking about sustainability, or what activities or interactions led them there. I can only assume with some individuals that they had a transformative experience that led them to certain sustainability activities, but if this did occur, it occurred outside of their faith community.

Some individuals may have transformed over time based on my understanding of the data, gathering information through instrumental and communicative learning, leading to a series of small incremental transformations over time. These 'slow transformations' were not glamorous epiphanies, but rather realizations the individuals made. For example, one participant realized that from information they had learned over time, some through interactions at the church and some through interactions outside the church, had influenced her current decision

making. She had ‘transformed’ how she thought of and approached sanitation in her business. She discussed the health industry and wastefulness, and that the information she had picked up had caused her to make certain decisions on purchasing cleaning and personal sanitation products.

Some participants did describe having a transformative experience, but that experience occurred outside of their faith community. For example, participant UU02 spoke of how certain experiences led them on the path towards sustainability:

I had a cancer scare when I was 30, that really woke me up in terms of... I can't eat organic every single time, but for me that was a big deal. It made me think of not only my own mortality, but also the legacy I'm going to leave in the world. I was environmentally conscious before that, but it was more of an experience opposed to an activity, and then I got involved with the sustainability committee. And you know there's groups that I've been a part of, opposing pipelines, so on and so forth. Just having a little more of an idea of how to change policy maybe, it also gives you an idea of people that are fighting against the pipeline, or whatever else. I know we are very reliant on fossil fuels, so I try, and kind have a very different kind of point of view of those things. So, I think it was more that I had this epiphany, then I was like oh ya, I want to be involved in those things. It wasn't sort of an activity, more of a life experience and then that kind of started a lot of those things. (UU02)

While this transformation is very important, and it led this participant to participate in the faith community, the transformation itself did not occur in the faith community. Transformative experiences, as well as other learning experiences, that occurred outside of the faith community were very important for most participants. In another example in the quote below, this participant spoke of how a trip to El Salvador influenced their sustainability decision making and behaviour:

Our kids had an opportunity to go to Disney world, it was after our family trip to El Salvador for a year, and when they came back, they said no. They weren't interested in going. They had trouble at that point in time going into stores. They were little. My son was 6 and my daughter was 8. They had lived with nothing. And they were physically not capable of walking into a store that had so much it seemed so incredibly wasteful for them [...] I recognized that even though we did a lot to minimize our impact we were

certainly not there yet. There was always something else we could do. My husband and I lessened our potential impact by not having TV in the house. The kids did not see commercials all of the time tempting them with the newest and brightest toys. We used plastic bags over and over again, encouraged the kids to bring home their containers and sandwich bags and continued to show them how to garden and be more willing to go out of their way to find and preserve food. [...] because I think that perspective changes the way you act on a regular basis. (SI01)

For this participant, a trip to El Salvador triggered personal reflection on their own sustainability choices and activities. It is also important to note that although these transformations occurred outside the faith community, in the data participant SI01 noted faith influenced decision making and participation in these sustainability activities.

Although transformative learning outcomes were minimal within the faith community, some participants engaged in meaningful transformative learning, which influenced their behaviour both inside and outside their faith community. In many instances, these participants shared these perspectives with others within their FC. Participant UU02 had a transformative experience outside the FC, but this influenced them to participate in sustainability activity within the FC. It seems that individuals who are bringing sustainability knowledge into the FC and sharing that information with congregation members are individuals who have had transformative experiences in their personal lives, or who were already engaging in sustainability. While these experiences within my data are not occurring within the FC, these transformative outcomes are still important to the FC because these individuals are the sources of sustainability action.

I got involved in my 20s, got involved with that. That's when we started returning our plastic bags and reusing plastic bags, and that was considered totally crazy, totally off the wall. This group was looking into the huge amount of land devoted to garbage. And I did some research on that. But a lot of information I recognize now that there were a lot of things I did that I shouldn't have been doing, a lot of environmentally wrong things. Now I'm much more careful. Even the use of water, to be careful not to waste water, and,

conserving water, I save all the left-over water, I use it for the plants, for the indoor plants, and things like that. Coffee grinds, and so on. (SI04)

6.4 Opportunities for Learning

Available activities within each faith community are discussed in Chapter 4 and are also considered opportunities for learning. Any available educational activity or encounter can be considered an opportunity for learning. These activities could include discussion, hands-on application, or exploring perspectives. Some participants discussed how and where they learned of activities within the church or sustainability activities outside the church. Through discussion with other faith-community members and other forms of information sharing, participants learned about sustainability activities that were available to them. Learning about a church activity is particularly important because of the potential of learning from engaging in those activities and of spreading information and getting people involved as such involvement was noted as sometimes being a challenge for a faith community. Also, for some participants, acquiring information about a church activity was a catalyst to increase their environmental activity and knowledge. Examples of activities discussed by participants included film showings, speakers, recycling and compost, petitions, electoral forums, and Earth Day activities. In the case of the UU church one participant indicated they actually joined when they learned about the environmental perspective of the church,

My very first service that I went to at the church, the Minister at the time, it was their transition minister, the topic was journeys, and she was talking about the journeys that people make. Also thinking about the impact of the journeys that we make, in terms of travel, but also the journey our stuff makes, the garbage, how there's so much stuff going everywhere, the carbon footprint... I was like, this is the place for me. And I mentioned that as well to our Minister now, when I was talking about officially joining, how that was sort of one of the things that made me go, yes, this is where I'd like to keep being and keep going. (UU08)

What happens in a Unitarian Church is the reading sort of text for the service that morning can come from anybody. It mostly comes from someone who has been thinking in terms of our time and what we need as people of faith in our time. So, the readings can sometimes come from environmentalists or people that are engaged in some kind of political activity. I can think of the example being when there was the pipeline in North Dakota and the protests against the pipeline going through. I don't know that it was actually a whole Sunday service, but there was a sense in which people in our church that morning were in solidarity with people on the reserve. I think it brings in a certain amount of awareness of what is going on in the world, because people share their concerns. (UU06)

There is a difference between the opportunities that are available to FC members, and the opportunities that are utilized. Several participants that were involved in organizing activities within their FC spoke of how difficult it was to engage FC members, or how difficult it was to have other FC members participate in activities. Participants in both cases exhibited learning outcomes, but there were more learning outcomes in UUCW. Also, participants exhibited multiple learning outcomes more frequently in UUCW than in St. Ignatius. Both St. Ignatius and UUCW participants' learning outcomes were fairly consistent with what learning opportunities were available to them. For example, several participants in St. Ignatius discussed waste management learning outcomes, and waste management was the most consistently accessible information for St. Ignatius parishioners. Learning outcomes that were more unpredictable were the opportunities to learn directly from other FC members in social settings.

Both St. Ignatius and UUCW had opportunities for learning available to FC members. However, there was a difference in amount and frequency. The types of activities available are listed in Table 6 and 7 in Chapter 4. St. Ignatius had many great events participants spoke about, but many of those events had occurred in the past. During my field work I was unable to attend any educational events, because there were none held in that timeframe. Participants spoke of the events that had been held in high regard, and many indicated they learned by participating in

these events. For example, the pipeline petition, movie screening of 'An Inconvenient Truth', and the sale of environmentally friendly products. The most consistent opportunities for learning in St. Ignatius were interpersonal interactions between FC members and waste management at coffee time, which occurs every Sunday after Mass. Planned events are much more infrequent. Based on my data, I would estimate planned activities occur a few times a year.

UUCW had more frequent activities for FC members to participate in. During my field work I was able to attend several activities, such as a talk on climate change, a documentary on electromagnetic radiation, a talk on permaculture, and an Earth Day service. However, there was not a consistent learning opportunity that was the same week to week. The most consistent opportunities for learning were also interpersonal interactions between FC members. Planned events were consistent learning opportunities, but more for the fact that there were frequent activities available to participate in, but the activity itself was different. Based on my time in the field and discussion with participants, planned events occurred frequently. I would estimate planned events occur monthly, or at least every few months. One reason this occurs is because the range of accessibility for UUCW is wider than St. Ignatius. For example, UUCW includes sustainability concepts in some Sunday services.

Participants acquired instrumental and communicative outcomes through opportunities for learning in their FC. The sources have been broken down into the general categories of discussion, hands on application, personal research, and sharing perspectives with others. Within hands on application I also briefly discuss embodied learning as a learning process. Below I discuss the opportunities for learning that were utilized by participants. Opportunities for learning are important because it shows where participants are acquiring the variety of learning outcomes.

6.4.1 Formal and Informal Discussions

Beyond learning about the existence of activities and the residual learning that occurs from that knowledge, some participants expanded their learning through observation, reflection and discussion about environmental church activity. Discussion, both formal and informal, was an important source of learning for most research participants. Participants spoke of many opportunities for discussion within the church, but at times were unclear as to how many people took advantage of those opportunities. However, participants did speak of acquiring knowledge or insights through discussion. Most discussion was informal taking place with peers or family members. Even ‘formal’ discussions were still more on the informal side. For example, a question and answer period after a documentary or a presentation. Many participants spoke of sustainability activity and information they learned outside their FC, but discussed this information with other FC members. Examples of discussion that occurred are:

I know that I’ve had many conversations throughout my career, here and other places, where someone has told me a story, or somebody has told me an experience, where I’ve gone, that’s really cool, or I’ve learned something new. Even when people have been teaching me about flood stories, and what it means to be a river city [...] And how that influences how people see and interact with their environment (UU10)

We used to have discussions at our EC meeting. When we started out, we started getting a lot of different books. And one of them was a really good one by Sallie McFague, she’s a theologian, she’s so good at writing, including the environment as part of our faith. As an important aspect of faith. Then it was Dr Arthur Walker Jones...He wrote *The Green Psalter*¹, that was his thesis, and he was actually looking at the voice of earth throughout the Bible Old Testament. (SI04)

This research itself also provided opportunities for learning, particularly in opportunities for discussion. For example:

¹ Walker-Jones, Arthur. (2009). *The Green Psalter: Resources for an Ecological Spirituality*. Fortress Press. Print.

And what I saw happen was, you would come and say what you were saying, and you would leave, and then the conversations would happen. Not with you, after. So, [name] was quite active in those conversations and people would share their feeling about this. Some people would have the feeling, you know, 'oh, too much work, I have enough to do'. And some people, 'oh that's so cool', and I'm one of those, 'that's so cool, I never thought of that', that kind of conversation. So, I actually found to a large extent people were great with it. (SI02)

In many instances, the research sparked conversations about sustainability, in turn creating opportunities for individuals to learn.

6.4.2 Hands on Application

There were opportunities for hands on application in the church, but not everyone spoke of these opportunities as sources of their own personal learning. Hands-on application is a form of embodied learning. Most participants from both churches listed compost and recycling as opportunities for hands-on application, but only a few cited this hands-on application as facilitating their own personal learning. Some examples of opportunities for hands-on application opportunities for learning included:

There are people who will come around and remind you, you know during coffee or other occasions. There's a little bit of a mini educational piece about that, that they need to explain to people who don't understand. And sometimes there are people who go to the garbage cans saying, 'just as a reminder, this goes in the compost'. (laughter). (SI02)

Well there's the composting, and there are the garage sales. Many of the things that I'm done with in life as my kids have grown up and have grown out of bikes, they've either gone into the church garage sales, or I'm part of a swap group, which has nothing to do with the church, but there's an increasing amount of church members in it [laughter]... So, that kind of environmental stewardship...it's a normal thing in all places I think. But we recycle, and don't throw things out that don't need to be thrown out kind of thing. (UU09)

I think the most direct hands-on way right now in the congregation is by all the little things I talked about. Because it takes people to turn on the dishwasher, and do the composting, and all the other stuff, and separate recycling. The other way is the GAC

itself, serving on it, doing its visioning, and they're figuring out what they're doing, what they have been doing in the past and what they can do more of in the future. (UU10)

Participants experienced successful hands on application in more instances in their personal lives. For example, one participant acquired farming and gardening skills through hands on application.

I think even just you know trying to be involved. With the gardening and I guess with the composting. And we all take turns, I haven't had a turn yet, but once it [compost] thaws out we have to take turns turning it. So that's one basic way of doing it. But even taking turns taking out the bins. Having it ready for pick up. Like whenever we have a meeting we're responsible for taking it out, that's one way of doing it. (UU02)

Hands-on application did not occur as frequently as the other learning platforms, perhaps due to the knowledge-based nature of many of the sustainability activities but learning by doing was a very effective platform for participants.

6.4.3 Exploring different perspectives

Linked to the discussion category, participants shared perspectives with others as a source of learning. There are opportunities within the church to explore these different perspectives, for example the opportunities to engage in discussion. Outside of informal discussions, the political forum held at UUCW provided opportunities to explore different perspectives. Several participants discussed opportunities for exploring different perspectives:

They do tend to bring in different speakers, and they're pretty good at drawing from a variety of sources. And even for story wisdom there's different people each week. We are getting a variety of perspectives that way, just showing up. In terms of actually seeking out other perspectives. (UU08)

The Minister often references environmental topics in their sermons or things they read and feel the congregation should know about, and there often might be something about the environment, so it broadens my knowledge. (UU13)

I guess going through discernment this process for the Synod, we felt that environment had to be addressed as one of the topics they would discuss. So, there's a whole comedy of errors of how we tried to put together...[laughter] a kind of blurb for them. But in the process of working on that I ended up trying to find information on other ECs and other Diocese and other churches, so, I guess that was a way of kind of comparing and contrasting, right. (SI07)

Exploring different perspectives provides opportunities to broaden understandings and views of sustainability.

6.5 Social Action Outcomes

In many instances the learning outcomes for individuals within the FC led to action.

Table 15 provides the list of social action outcomes found in the data and organized according to the themes established by Moyer *et al.* (2016). Sub-themes listed were grounded in the data.

Several participants from both cases turned learning into action by either applying something they learned, sharing something they learned with others, or applying learning in a group. This is broken into individual action, interpersonal action, and collective action.

Table 15 Social action outcomes

Type of Action	Outcomes/Examples
Individual Social Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composting at home • Reusing (e.g., reusable bags/cups/plates etc., second-hand clothing) • Energy use at home • Purchasing choices • Transportation (e.g., biking/walking more, choosing an energy efficient car) • Reducing water use
Interpersonal Social Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing with family or friends through conversation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information on saving water/energy, on reusing/reusable products, ○ Information on natural products/cleaning products ○ Composting and recycling • Sharing with faith community

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing with other groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Energy reduction/LED lighting/ ○ (Individual) letter writing
Collective Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pipeline petition • Coffee ministry • Waste management (compost and recycling) • Committee work • Group letter writing

6.5.1 Individual Action

Most participants who discussed applying something they learned, or individual action, applied it in their own home. Participants usually gained information or skills from their FC, and took what they learned and applied it in their day to day lives, such as composting, as mentioned above. This, of course, was limited to participants who exhibited learning outcomes, and not all participants discussed individual action. However, many participants who discussed learning outcomes, particularly instrumental learning outcomes, spoke of applying what they learned. Many times, this was seemingly simple tasks, such as sorting recycling at home, or purchasing products for the home. In these instances, learning was a ripple effect for participants to act and apply what they learned in their personal lives. Participant SI01 discussed taking action by changing what kind of soap was purchased and applying that at home:

I/we have a cottage on Lake Winnipeg, and our practices our fairly sustainable, but I was not using biodegradable soap. I did all the time in the lakes when we went canoeing, right, we either don't use soap or use biodegradable only for dishwashing, but all biodegradable. But I wasn't doing that at the cottage. And realizing that even though our water is in a tank we don't use the grandfather clause of septic systems at all, it's still going to a lagoon, which is very well managed, but there's still phosphates right, so we changed our practices a little bit. (SI01)

This participant discussed action they took to reduce energy consumption:

We don't have second car, I refuse to have second car, so I prefer to have the one that you connect, hybrid car, I drive my family wherever I go so I have that advantage I don't have two cars. I try my best to save energy at home too. And I save water, always, water is getting more expensive in Winnipeg. That's what I do. And I teach that to my daughters. (SI03)

This participant takes individual action by applying sustainability to their personal life, but also takes interpersonal action by teaching those things to her daughters.

6.5.2 Interpersonal Social Action

One of the most prominent forms of action was interpersonal action. Many participants spoke of sharing information they learned with others. Sometimes this was through discussion with family members or friends, and sometimes this was showing others what they learned. For example, participant SI02 learned about the composting program in St. Ignatius and shared that information:

I tell my husband. Because he works in a non-profit. And I thought he would like to be the one who initiated this in his workplace. He works for a large service organization that has over 100 programs. So, whoa, wouldn't that be great. And they don't have it yet. So, we've had a few conversations about how we might do that, like, make it happen. And they're pretty progressive so they would buy on but...there'd be quite a bit of dialogue...large groups take awhile to get on board right. (SI02)

This also shows the potential of sharing information and information being transferred even further. Other participants discussed sharing information with their friends or family, including general sustainability discussions and information on natural cleaning products. For example:

I have tried to share information with my family, I share lots of information on Facebook, but I think I've lost people. [laughter]. My kids, they don't all want to hear about it anymore [laughter]. Some of them are on a different path. Two are interested. Two are not so. [laughter]. But I find it's much easier to be around like-minded people, that's for sure. It's not as upsetting. Knowing when... when it might be good to give information. (UU01)

I mean with the friends that I hang out with, you know there's a number of groups. There's the art group here, there's the coffee group I meet with on Saturdays that are different, then there's a group at St Ignatius, then there's a group at St Benedict's. There are different groups that I know. So, I think conversation eventually comes around to everything, including sustainability and the environment. So, I put my two cents in there. It's always interesting to see the reactions to people and how many people are concerned and who aren't. (SI06)

Usually my friends, I kind of share that with them every now and then. I used to clean houses, and I still do, and I use natural products. So, a family friend that I every now and then would clean her house, I explained to her since the last time I cleaned your house, I can't use any more of the stuff that you had been using. Is it ok if I used ... whatever. And I said I've been using it for cleaning every other week in a house that I clean, and I've never had any issues. She was really surprised. She went into the bathroom and the shower, she was surprised. She was like, what did you use! Vinegar and dish soap that's all I use, and you soak it and let it sit. And as you're cleaning other stuff you let it soak. She was so surprised. And vinegar is so cheap. I think in some ways she's converted as well. I think a lot of people when they don't know there's an alternative, they don't do it. You have to give them the alternative. Because I think when... if you give them another option, they're more likely to see, 'oh that's another option'. Whether or not they take it that's another thing. I'm not pushy with my friends, but I believe in setting an example. If they want to follow that's different, but I definitely don't push it on them. I do share it with them just kind of for fun. So, my friend, the one that I cleaned her house, she was like wow that's all you use. And ya, the kitchen, the sink, the toilet, everything. The vinegar breaks the build up and then the soap takes the greasiness away. So yup. I think it's been positive. (UU02)

Some participants shared sustainability information with other groups, such as the wider public. For example:

I like to get across the idea of antibacterial being harmful, of being dangerous, of creating risk for superbugs in the community. But there's people all gung-ho, and they put antibacterial in the kitchen. So, I have to put a sign, a laminated sign, stick it out there, and put vinegar on the shelf. I like to share that with people, and they don't know that information (SI04)

I wrote a letter to the Free Press that was published in which I really expressed my outrage at the fact that we're using, we've got this clean water to drink everyday, and that we, I suggested actually that the citizens of Winnipeg take responsibility for building that road and water treatment plant, never mind getting the federal government involved, we should be taking it on. Because we are the ones that are benefiting from their stress,

everyday. And so, there was a big push then and we've been talking about maybe we need to have another walk to push the process along, because its slow. (UU03)

Interpersonal action is also particularly relevant for both cases because the majority of participants spoke of learning outcomes and sustainability behaviour in their lives that was not connected to their FC. Some of these participants took things they learned outside their FC and brought it inside the FC to share with other FC members, mostly through conversation or participating in a church activity. Interpersonal action is not just important for FC members to spread information outside the FC, but to also bring it within the FC. This is particularly relevant for committee members, who mostly took information they learned from an activity outside their FC and brought it in to share with the FC through committee work. The most active participants are bringing most of the knowledge into the FC, and learning new information amongst each other. This interpersonal action adds to the social network aspect of the FC. For example:

So, when I first joined the church someone was talking about the reason she joined is because she was very involved with social activism, but then she became too busy to be involved with social activism, so the church kind of gave her a short cut. And it's like that for me as well, but probably more on the environmental side than the social activism side. Although both are important to me, but I think I've probably had more opportunities to be involved with the environmental things. (UU09)

Well I certainly think things like *Laudato Si*. You know even beyond the Catholic Church people are aware of that Encyclical, which is unusual. You know, I think it's a thing of leading by example and education. And there's members of the Parish and members of the faith community, but their also members of other organizations. Now I haven't got any specific examples, but you know I'm sure some of our ideas, or some of the ideas that the faith community is doing have been spread beyond. I know in my particular case in the organization I'm involved in, not a faith community, a retirement community, for a better word, we're trying to get rid of the Styrofoam. So, it does go beyond. Because I know Styrofoam is no good. (SI08)

Participants are either learning within their FC and then sharing information with people in their personal lives or with other FC members, or participants are learning outside their FC and bringing that information into their FC and sharing with other FC members.

6.5.3 Collective Action

Groups did apply learning through collective action, but it was not as prominent as individual and interpersonal action. Although collective action was not discussed as much, some collective action that was taken occurred consistently. For example, participating in committee work was considered collective action. Committees meet regularly and share information semi-regularly. The Coffee Ministry in St. Ignatius involves parishioners acting collectively to help keep after-Mass coffee running and to continue the use of reusable cups and plates. Without the volunteers' help, after-Mass coffee would most likely be disposable items. The Environment Committee acting at after-Mass coffee spreading waste education is also collective action. These were the most consistent activities that occurred week to week in St. Ignatius, and they are led by collective action. Examples of collective action taken by the EC are as follows:

We started off tackling getting real cups instead of having Styrofoam. And that was a long process. So, we were doing that. And then we developed a waste management system, which we put in place over quite a few years using Samborski's Environmental Services. They pick up the compostables from us, we got that put in place. We were wanting to raise consciousness, so we started putting on different events in the church. We did several things with Manitoba Eco Network. They did some workshops with composting. And, making a composting bin and things like that. We had several of those. We had a few environmental fairs. We had kids involved drawing pictures. We were trying to do a lot of consciousness raising, and then we would get public speakers. We had people from climate change coming to talk to us and also to the parishioners. And we showed films. We showed a locally made film, *The Scars of Mercury*. That took place on Grassy Narrows which is one of the longest standing blockades going on in Canada. It was mercury contamination because of pulp and paper industry from the Wabigoon river system, and it contaminated the water from people who lived on Grassy Narrows and the White Dog reserve (SI04).

Most of the sustainability activity within UUCW is spear-headed by the Green Action Committee. For example, presentations on climate change, permaculture, and other topics, films, and the annual Earth Day sermon are organized by the GAC. The GAC is the group that most consistently organizes pro-environmental activity. Other groups do organize activities related to this work, such as the bike workshop and social justice work, as these topics are all interrelated. Although participants spoke about participating in interpersonal action the most, the collective action described by participants might be equally as relevant. Participants perhaps did not engage in collective action but benefited from the individuals that participated in collective action. For example, a participant that attended a film on a sustainability topic learned new information from that film, and perhaps shared that information with others. That film might not have been shown without the collective action of a group or committee. Therefore, not many participants engaged directly in collective action, but observed collective action and benefited from it. An example of an event organized through collective action is as follows:

I think that's part of the reason why having a specific service, like the Earth Day service coming up, it involves the congregation as a whole a little bit more. I think they know that the GAC is floating around in the periphery, but I think it's nice to facilitate that service as a group, and say that we are in this together. We're present, we do this, this is what we've been doing, this is what we have to offer our community, and this is how to get involved if you want (UU02)

Other examples of collective action are provided in the examples below:

Other groups got together to walk for Shoal Lake clean water and that group really grew and took off. By the time the walk happened, it was early September I believe, thousands and thousands of people walking. And it began with our Minister and a woman from West Broadway United Church Community Ministry and a few others being key people in organizing it, and working together with First Nations people, and broadcasting it. It snowballed, by the time we walked it was huge...And so, people from our church community and others were monitoring and checking in regularly. What's happening, what have you done, what steps have you taken. And its been a very slow process as you probably know. (UU03)

One of the things we did though, we got involved in the petition opposing the Energy East pipeline when that was still an issue, and we used water as a sacred gift, we used spiritual language for that... So there were a few people... but actually, we got quite a lot of support. We got two Catholic churches involved besides our own, which is phenomenal. (SI04)

This is where collective action started. So, whether we're just trying to maintain the building is a miracle of collective action and it is... I have a story I tell, I ran a raffle, and I sold people tickets, 2 bucks a pop, it was a wide raffle and we bought a defibrillator for the church. And there was an older couple, middle class, cushy, so they were asking about, did they win. I said, no, sorry. But then I said, we all won because we bought a defibrillator, so when you have a heart attack, it will save your life. (SI11)

Collective action mostly occurred within the committees or through committee work, but collective action did occasionally occur elsewhere.

6.6 Discussion

This chapter confirms that participants in FCs are learning through their FC. Participants acquired instrumental and communicative learning outcomes through learning opportunities available within their FC, and some learning outcomes resulted in social action. Instrumental learning outcomes in this study mostly related to knowledge enhancement, such as increasing knowledge of sustainable products and waste management, and communicative learning outcomes such as insights into one's own values and interests allowed participants to become more sustainable. Instrumental and communicative learning outcomes in this research support other studies (e.g. Kerton & Sinclair, 2010; Marshke & Sinclair, 2008; Sinclair *et al.*, 2011) that have also documented learning in the context of sustainability and have found relevant instrumental and communicative learning outcomes. Some studies (e.g., Moyer, 2015; Moyer *et al.*, 2016; Moyer & Sinclair, 2016), have also documented sustainability-based learning outcomes within faith-based organizations which coincide with many of my results.

Instrumental learning outcomes occurred more frequently than communicative learning outcomes in this research, which aligns with what other studies have found (e.g., Sinclair *et al.*, 2011; Sinclair *et al.*, 2012). Many learning opportunities within St. Ignatius and UUCW lend themselves to participants acquiring instrumental learning outcomes, with some available sustainability activities being based on practical information, such as waste. This is similar to the activities in the study by Kidwell *et al.* (2018) that reported waste management and energy efficiency as the most frequent activities organized by FCs. Therefore, instrumental learning outcomes were also often practical or applied in a participant's day-to-day routine. For example, techniques of waste management were the most ubiquitous topic that people learned about. This is not that surprising as waste management activities within the FC were one of the most readily available, and participants deal with waste daily and could transfer the knowledge or skills learned in their own home. Other studies also found waste management as an important learning outcome (e.g., Marshke & Sinclair, 2009; Sims & Sinclair, 2008), and similarly, other studies (e.g., Sinclair *et al.*, 2011; Walker *et al.*, 2014) have found skills that can be practiced on one's own property, such as planting trees, are common instrumental learning outcomes.

Although communicative learning outcomes occurred less frequently, the outcomes that occurred were important. Communicative learning outcomes were the result of discussion and reflection, and more often showed an understanding a participant had achieved. For example, participants described coming to an understanding of how much they valued sustainability, or better understood how others valued sustainability. This aligns with what other studies have found, where participants gained a greater understanding of the importance of something in their life, or gained an understanding of others through interactions in a particular setting (e.g., Quinn & Sinclair, 2016; Sims & Sinclair, 2008).

Instrumental and communicative learning occurred simultaneously in some instances, or influenced one another, which also aligns with what other studies have found (e.g., Quinn & Sinclair, 2016; Walker et al., 2014; Sims & Sinclair, 2008). Data show that in some instances a participant would enhance their knowledge, and that new knowledge motivated discussion, which then catalysed a communicative learning outcome. This was the case with the example of participant SI01 who learned more about water pollution and biodegradable products within the FC, and in turn catalysed personal reflection to understand how they value clean water. This became increasingly noticeable as I was coding, when an instrumental and communicative learning outcome could fit in both categories. As I was coding, I also noticed the wide variety of learning outcomes participants described. There were the main outcomes, such as waste management, but there were also outcomes that were not as common. These outcomes were still relevant as they provided insight into what participants were learning from the sustainability activities within the FC. I speculate this diversity in outcomes is due to the diversity of experience within the FC and the sporadic nature of sustainability events.

It is also important to note that being part of a sustainability-based committee resulted in learning outcomes. This reflects the study by Marschke & Sinclair (2009) where resource-management committee members within a fishing community learned through monthly meetings and discussions. Participants in committees in UUCW and St. Ignatius both learned through their involvement in committee work. For example, participant SI06 said, “one [committee member] will come with information that definitely impacts on my learning, and my changing my behaviour”, and participant UU13 said, “I always learn things, especially from other people on the committee, because they all seem to have a specialized knowledge of some aspect of sustainability”.

Participants rarely discussed a transformative outcome, which also reflects what other studies have found (e.g., Walker *et al.*, 2014; Moyer *et al.*, 2014). As others have noted (e.g., Sims and Sinclair, 2008) transformation is not common and normally requires an individual to face a disorientating situation. The participants that did discuss what I have identified as a transformative experience had that experience outside of their faith community. As discussed in this chapter, some individuals may have transformed over time by slowly gathering learning outcomes, leading to small incremental transformations. This aligns with TLT, in that the theory suggests that individuals can undergo a “series of transitions which permit one to revise specific assumptions about oneself and others until the very structure of assumptions becomes transformed” (Mezirow, 1981, pg. 8). Small incremental change is still important for transformative outcomes. It is possible that with removing imposed barriers within the FCs would enhance the frequency of transformative experiences.

For many participants, learning resulted in social action. My data show that by discussing, sharing, or applying what they learned, participants further affirmed their learning outcomes by taking action, and at times this assisted in the learning process, which also aligns with what other studies have found (e.g., Moyer *et al.*, 2016). Collective social action that occurred in this study mostly came from the work of the committees, such as organizing events, which aligns with the study by Moyer *et al.*, (2016) where collective social action within the FBO study involved training activities. Actions also included raising sustainability themed sermons, discussion, and newsletters, which reflects what other sustainably active FCs are doing (e.g. Kidwell *et al.*, 2018)

Committees within FCs can improve sustainability through campaigning and putting sustainability ideas into action (Koehrsen, 2018). For example, the EC at St. Ignatius spent two

years dedicated to waste management education. Interestingly, Marschke & Sinclair (2009) noted that the resource-management committee dedicated several years to waste management education. Committees acted as advocacy groups (VanNijnatten, 2016) within the FCs by supporting a cause and spreading information. Collective social action enacted by the committees benefited the wider faith community populations by providing sustainability activities, and therefore learning opportunities, to the populations. Committee members acted on something they learned, more often what they learned outside their FC, and organized an activity around that learning outcome. Kidwell *et al.* (2018) note that members of environmentally themed FC groups are often already active outside the FC, resulting in sharing resources and information. Moyer *et al.*, (2016) confirms that such action is reflection of learning that has occurred.

More participants discussed individual and interpersonal action outcomes than collective action outcomes. In many instances, participants applied something they learned in their own home, or shared information with their friends and family. Overall, the findings regarding action outcomes reflect other studies (e.g., Moyer *et al.*, 2016; Walker *et al.*, 2014; Sinclair *et al.*, 2011) where participant learning encouraged sustainability action, and in some cases, action also facilitated learning itself.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

Sustainability is a word that is often both overused and underutilized. Despite the current global-ecological crisis, many individuals are not applying sustainability in their daily lives. Learning is often seen as a way for individuals to adapt a more sustainable lifestyle. In this research, I explored individual learning for sustainability within faith communities in Canada, and the connections that emerge between faith and the sustainability actions and beliefs individuals are engaging in. Transformative Learning Theory was used as a framework to approach the learning that occurred.

Two cases were chosen for this research: St. Ignatius Parish and the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg. I completed a total of 26 semi-structured interviews, 63 qualitative questionnaires, and personal observation. Questionnaires provided an overview of what was happening in each FC, including sustainability activities and general thoughts on faith and sustainability. Interviews provided further detail to questionnaire data, including more in-depth discussions on ideas of sustainability, learning outcomes that occurred, personal connections between faith and sustainability, and social action. The data that emerged included the kinds of experiences participants were having that led to learning, including how and what participants were learning. The role of the FC was also relevant in the data, including the importance of congregating a group of people and providing space for socializing and activity. Sustainability activities and barriers were also very relevant in the FC's role in learning. This research also assessed the significance of social action in participant's experiences. Social action mobilized what participants learned, making social action equally as important to the learning outcome itself.

In this chapter, I draw conclusions related to each of the objectives set. I relate my findings to my research and objectives, including providing a framework connecting faith, learning and sustainability. Finally, I provide some concluding thoughts about my research.

7.2 Sustainability activities in Faith Communities

The results related to the sustainability activities at UUCW and St. Ignatius were outlined in Chapter 4. The data regarding the sustainability activities undertaken were categorized into activism, education, environment and conservation, and general church activity. The data revealed that the main focus of the committees was on educational events with activism falling at the other end of the spectrum for both FCs. Moyer (2018) notes that evidence of FCs sustainability activity in Canada is lacking, and therefore it is difficult to tell whether the level of activity compares to other FCs in Canada because there is minimal literature available to compare.

Educational activities in this study included events such as films, workshops, and waste training. Other studies (e.g., Sinclair *et al.*, 2013; Moyer *et al.*, 2014; Sims & Sinclair, 2008) have also found educational activities provided opportunities for learning such as talks, demonstrations, workshops and training sessions as educational events (Moyer *et al.*, 2014; Sims & Sinclair, 2008; Sinclair *et al.*, 2013). This reflects the kinds of events found in St. Ignatius and UUCW. Organized sustainability activities also provided a catalyst for FC members to move towards a potential learning outcome and a focused path towards sustainability information or skills.

Socializing and general green church activities were discussed as sustainability activities in Chapter 4. Not every participant was aware of the related sustainability committee within their

FC, and not every participant participated in an organized educational activity. However, these participants still discussed a learning or social action outcome. This shows that participants were also learning outside of the organized sustainability educational activities. Sims & Sinclair (2008) found word of mouth provided opportunities for learning. This reflects the learning that occurs in St. Ignatius and UUCW through socializing and communication.

While the committees were responsible for most of the organized sustainability activity within the FCs, committee work and meetings also acted as a sustainability activity. Discussion, activity organization, and exchanging ideas provided learning opportunities for the committee members. Sinclair *et al.*, (2013) found organized meetings provided opportunities for learning. This reflects the learning that occurs in the EC and GAC meetings.

More frequent planned activity occurs in UUCW than in St. Ignatius, most likely due to the barriers discussed in Chapter 5. Both St. Ignatius and UUCW have had successful and well attended sustainability activities, and both have had events that have had poor attendance. In both St. Ignatius and UUCW, some participants praised the level of sustainability activity and engagement, and other participants thought not enough was being done.

7.3 Learning and action outcomes

Participants in both UUCW and St. Ignatius documented instrumental and communicative learning outcomes and resulting social action. I was, however, only able to identify a few situations that could be transformative. Most participants had already incorporated sustainability into their daily lives in some way, but their FC enhanced their knowledge and actions. Some participants discussed most of their learning occurring outside their FC but exhibited social action by bringing that knowledge into their FC.

Instrumental learning outcomes were more frequent for participants than communicative learning in both St. Ignatius and UUCW. However, in some instances instrumental and communicative learning overlapped. For example, a participant learned new information about waste management increasing their knowledge, but at that same time gained insight into their own personal values on waste. In many instances, participants discussed their learning as multidimensional. Quinn & Sinclair (2016), also establish this sort of relationship in their study, where instrumental and communicative learning can occur at the same time, where one can trigger the other, or where one supports the other.

Only one participant described an “epiphany” experience, leading to a transformative learning outcome. However, this occurred outside their FC. This experience was important because it led the person to participate in sustainability activity within their FC and contribute personal knowledge. Other transformative learning outcomes described were “slow transformations”, where participants learned things over time, and only came to the realization about the importance of what they learned and the change it made in their lives later on. Sustainability activity within each FC might be contributing to FC members ‘slow transformations’, but at this point, it is difficult to tell. Other studies (e.g., Kerton & Sinclair, 2010), have found some participants experience incremental change towards transformation.

Many participants described a sustainability activity, learning outcome, and the resulting action from that process. Several participants practiced interpersonal social action by sharing information within their FC or with their friends and family. Moyer *et al.*, (2014) mirrors these results, in also establishing the role of participants sharing information within their community or personal network. In most instances, participants who learned within the FC shared information with other FC members or with others in their personal lives, and when a participant learned

outside their FC, they brought that information into the FC and shared with other FC members. Participants both brought information into the FC and mobilized information outside the FC. Marschke & Sinclair (2009) describe similar results, where a participant attended a workshop on waste management and in turn took action and mobilized the information. Social action is an important aspect of learning because social action mobilizes information, shows a participant applying what they learned, and can assist the learning process (Moyer *et al.*, 2016)

Collective social action mostly occurred within and through the sustainability-related committees. Committee meetings acted as participatory development, where committee members could exchange ideas and develop activities and events. The personal knowledge and experience of the committee members was then reflected in the activities of the FC.

In order to foster more learning outcomes and social action, the data lead me to suggest that FCs could create sustainability activities that integrate more learning opportunities for FC members. Many activities are knowledge-based activities, such as films and presentations. Planning more activities with hands-on application, or incorporating hands-on application in knowledge-based activities, can potentially increase the amount of learning outcomes experienced by FC members. Also, incorporating more faith-based connections to sustainability activities could potentially facilitate more learning outcomes and transformative experiences, particularly in St. Ignatius. Providing a message that connects faith to sustainability provides a different perspective on sustainability that could connect with individuals who might not typically engage in sustainability activity.

Earlier in this thesis, I discussed the possibility for faith communities to transform consciousness towards sustainability. While the participants in this study did not experience any drastic transformations from being unaware of environmental issues to engaging in sustainability

action, learning opportunities within the FC did trigger learning that enhanced participants sustainability knowledge and engagement, and I was impressed by the resulting action taken. Participants already had their own understanding of sustainability, and their FC helped to shape and enhance participant's knowledge.

7.4 Role of the faith community

The faith community is a community of people who congregate together to worship and sometimes engage in social experiences. Based on my data, one of the biggest advantages a FC has in regard to learning for sustainability is that ability to congregate people together, or as Veldman *et al.*, (2014) describe, providing 'platforms for connectivity'. FC members spread information, bringing outside information in and inside information out. This acts like a 'social hub' or 'social network' for exchanging information. The exchanging of ideas between individuals was one of the most effective forms of acquiring new information. The FC provided space for this networking and idea sharing from within and outside. Like Moyer *et al.*, (2014), I found that the networks and community built within St. Ignatius and UUCW enabled learning and assisted in removing barriers to sustainability action. For example, my results above showed how one participant had learned about various sustainability topics because of their involvement with the church, that they then networked with other groups, and were exposed to more ideas that deepen their commitment to sustainability, while also sharing what they had learned (UU13). This aligns with Moyer *et al.*, (2014), where communities and networks also include formal and informal learning opportunities where individuals encourage and support one another to act sustainably. The faith communities I studied provided space for FC members to connect with others, discuss, and exchange ideas. This space for discussion proved to actually be an informal

sustainability activity in and of itself , which was essential for the sustainability learning of some participants as it facilitated or confirmed a learning outcome.

As discussed, the FC takes on the role of ‘social hub’ and provides space for social networks. In some instances, there was evidence of outside or institutional networks. Johnston (2013) notes that faith-based communities can internationally transmit messages of sustainability through various networks and can link sustainability with a sacred duty. While most of the sustainability activity occurred at the grass-roots level in the FCs, there were some networks discussed that were available outside of the FC. For example, there is an international ‘Green Sanctuary Program’ available for the Unitarian Universalists in which a church can become accredited as a Green Sanctuary. UUCW is currently working towards becoming an accredited Green Sanctuary, however, this process began post-fieldwork. Such action, however, extends the network to the institutional level. UUCW has potential to connect with an international network by participating in the Green Sanctuary Program, and accreditation gives UUCW the potential to provide institutional resources some participants described as lacking.

At St. Ignatius, no participant discussed a sustainability-based institutional level program present within the Parish. However, several participants discussed the Pope’s Encyclical *Laudato Si*, which provides sustainability information from the highest level of the Catholic Church. *Laudato Si* confirms the notion that a sustainability message can be internationally transmitted through networks and align sustainability messages with a sacred duty. *Laudato Si* was a message not just for Catholics, but a global message for all sharing ‘our common home’. However, in the American context, Pope Francis’s message is not universally known or discussed (Ives & Kidwell, 2019). This is reflected in St. Ignatius where *Laudato Si* has been utilized by some participants, but it has not trickled down through the hierarchy to the FC itself.

It has jumped from the highest level to the individual level. The EC has used messages of ‘caring for creation’, but it is not widespread across the Parish. I speculate this is because *Laudato Si* is new to CST, and the Catholic teaching magisterium is centralized and therefore information is slow to dissemination. There is potential for St. Ignatius to support *Laudato Si*’s message and build its platform on sustainability. While data confirms that messages of sustainability are being transmitted internationally, there is still much room for growth. Utilizing institutional resources and sustainability programs only strengthens the sustainability agenda within the FC and adds an extra layer of support to the FCs sustainability message to individual FC members.

7.5 Relationship between faith and sustainability action

Participants described their faith as supporting their sustainability activity, as their faith and sustainability as not separate, or, as some noted their sustainability activity is part of their faith. At UUCW, more participants said their faith supported their sustainability activity, and at St. Ignatius, more participants said sustainability was either part of their faith or not separate. These answers allude to differences within each faith itself.

At UUCW, FC members are connected by the seven principles of the Unitarian Universalist faith. The seventh principle supports sustainability activity, which describes the interconnectedness of all beings (Brandenburg, 2007; Morales, 2012). This aspect of sustainability is embedded within the faith itself, which makes it very easy for sustainability to be accepted and supported within the FC. Many UUCW participants attend UUCW because it supports their personal values. Most participants did not start attending UUCW because of their UU faith, but because it was a community of people where they felt supported. Gilmore (2007) notes that the 7th principle of Unitarian Universalism pushes members to consider how their individual choices impacts the larger group, which aligns with participants statements of support

for their sustainability activities. There were a few UUCW participants who were strongly linked to the UU faith, but they were the minority.

At St. Ignatius, all research participants strongly linked themselves to the Catholic faith, but there was no particular set of principles that they noted that connected or embedded sustainability with their Catholic faith, unlike the UU. Several participants argued, however, that sustainability was inherently connected to their faith, and they saw no barriers between the two. Participants described only human imposed barriers, such as Biblical interpretations and inefficient buildings, that made sustainability a barrier. This is reflected in Gottlieb (2006), where he states that the text that God values creation was always there, but it was just only recently applied to the environment. Biblical interpretations also provide the idea of 'caring for creation' (Johnston, 2013; Kearns, 1996; Ellingson *et al.*, 2012). Many participants argued that sustainability was part of their Catholic faith, but it is not universally applied. Pope John Paul II made statements supporting care for creation (Gottlieb, 2006), and Pope Francis wrote *Laudato Si* (2015), which supported the connection between the Catholic faith and the environment. However, the Catholic Church is vast, with over a billion members and a hierarchal structure, and therefore there is diversity in opinion, slow change and sustainability has only recently been recognized (Gottlieb, 2006). This is reflected in St. Ignatius, where many participants described the connection between their faith and sustainability, but also that it was not considered by all FC members.

All the participants I interviewed supported sustainability, with most UUCW participants describing their faith as supporting their sustainability activity and with most St. Ignatius participants describing sustainability as part of their faith or as one in the same. Although it seems that St. Ignatius participants have a stronger faith connection to sustainability, there was

still more sustainability activity present in UUCW. This could be due to a number of reasons, including the discussed barriers in Chapter 5, such as hierarchal structures being present in Catholicism and not Unitarian Universalism. The St. Ignatius participants I interviewed all connected their faith to sustainability, but with parishioners who do not connect sustainability or engage in sustainability, it might be more difficult to engage those individuals because they are deeply rooted with their views on the Catholic tradition separate from sustainability. In a study on faith-based sustainability in Kenya, Moyer (2015) noted that using faith-based ideas for teaching sustainability was effective. The EC at St. Ignatius does incorporate some ‘caring for creation’ messages in some sustainability activity, but it is not universal. If sustainability education within St. Ignatius incorporated more connections to Catholicism, it might open the door for more parishioners to connect their faith to sustainability.

This shows that although St. Ignatius has strong connections to faith and sustainability, it is not enough to overcome the imposed barriers. UUCW participants have less connections, but sustainability is embedded within the faith and barriers are more ‘surface level’, limited to personal and financial barriers. Although faith is an important motivator, if the connection to sustainability is not reciprocated by the broader FC population and institution it makes success very difficult. Ultimately, implementing sustainability activity in UUCW is easier than at St. Ignatius.

7.6 Framework describing relationships between faith, learning and sustainability action

Describing the relationship between faith, learning, and sustainability action is complicated, especially because of the differences in connections to faith and sustainability among participants. Figure 1 displays the relationship, as I feel it was revealed in my data, through a simplified framework.

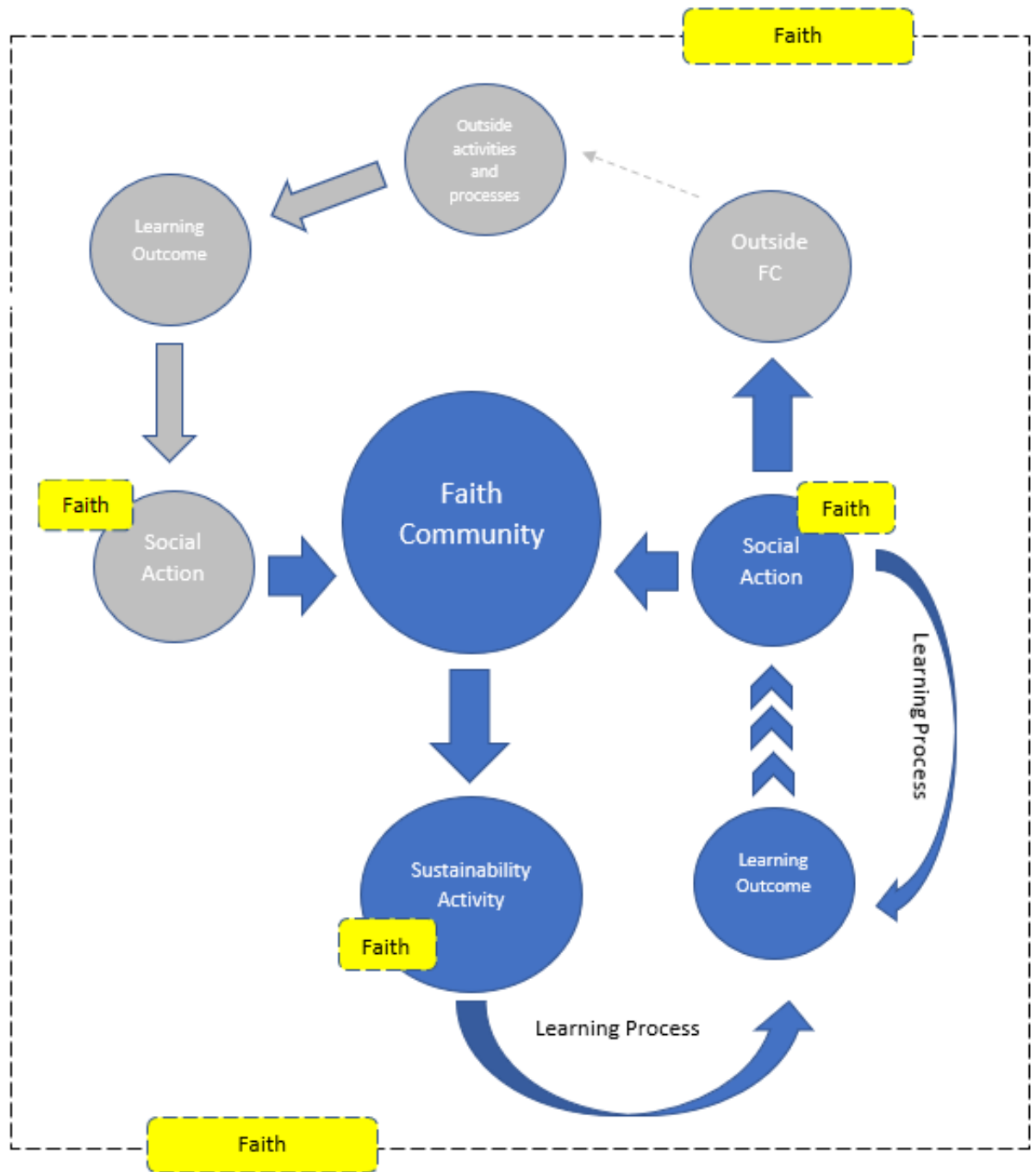


Figure 1 Framework describing relationship between faith, learning and sustainability action

Figure 1 shows the connections between faith, learning and sustainability action in faith communities. The figure is outlined with a dashed line and labelled as faith in yellow. The line is dashed to represent that faith influenced this process, but on various levels as described by participants and recognizing there are many other influences on individuals, particularly related to sustainability actions. Faith community appears in the center of the figure, as all learning and action is filtered through the FC in my data. Sustainability activity and learning opportunities occur both inside and outside the faith community. An arrow points from the FC to sustainability activity, representing sustainability activity that comes from within the FC. Another dashed faith box is linked with the sustainability activity box because at times activities were linked with faith. A curved arrow connects the sustainability activity box and the learning outcome box, and the arrow is labeled as learning process. This represents a participant attending a sustainability activity, going through learning processes, and gaining a learning outcome. The arrow is curved to represent that while learning processes can occur within the attended sustainability activity, the learning process can take a different route, such as through other activities like socializing and through personal processes such as reflection. From learning processes, a participant can achieve a learning outcome. There are separated arrows between the learning outcomes box and the social action box. This represents that a learning outcome can produce social action, but social action does not always occur from a learning outcome. The dashed faith box is attached to social action because some participants were motivated by faith. There are then several arrows leading away from social action, one to outside the FC, one to inside the FC, and one learning process arrow leading back to the learning outcome box. The arrows that lead from social action to outside the FC and to inside the FC represent that the knowledge learned can either be

mobilized back into the FC, or outside the FC in participant's personal lives, or both. The curved learning process arrow represents that social action itself can also enhance the learning outcome.

From the 'outside FC' circle, there is a small dashed arrow leading to the 'outside activities and processes' circle. This connection intentionally appears weak because further research is needed to explore this relationship. The 'outside activities and processes' leads to a 'learning outcome' and then leads to 'social action'. A solid arrow flows between each of these circles towards the central 'faith community' circle. This represents the instances where participants brought outside information they learned into the FC. The line is solid because anytime a participant brought outside information in, it represented social action on something they learned outside the FC. This information then flowed into the FC and potentially influenced sustainability activity, in turn triggering the learning process. It is also important to note that participating in a sustainability activity does not guarantee learning.

As discussed, faith outlines the figure in a dashed line to represent that faith encompasses the processes in varying ways, and at times, connections between faith and sustainability were incorporated into the sustainability activity. In connection with participant's definitions of sustainability and described connections to faith, participants also practiced their faith through 'caring for creation' and the 7th principle. For some, participating in a sustainability activity or sharing learning through social action was a way to practice their faith. The relationship between faith, learning and sustainability action was difficult to relay in a framework because of the variety of experiences. Faith motivated participant's learning and sustainability action, but motivations were not universal. Most individuals were initially motivated by their personal connections between faith and sustainability and carried those connections with them throughout

their process. Less frequently, an individual became aware of a connection between their faith and sustainability in a process, which only occurred in St. Ignatius.

7.7 Further research

In future research it will be important to include more faith communities expanding the breadth of interviewees, and taking a multi-level approach. This research is relatively new in Canada and continuing to create a clearer picture of the sustainability actions of faith communities is necessary to confirm if these research results are universal, or if something else is happening in other communities. Also, Unitarian Universalism is relatively unique in comparison to some other religions, in that there is no requirement to believe in a God. Including a variety of religions would help to increase the scope of the research and to see if this is somewhat universal across many faith communities. I attempted a third case study at a mosque in Winnipeg to add to this research but was unsuccessful in recruiting interview participants. I believe not only ensuring the faith communities studied are diverse in religious background, but also understanding how each faith connects to sustainability will be beneficial for implementing further learning opportunities and change.

It will also be important to expand the breadth of interviewees to include more FC members that have not had any learning outcomes and do not participate in sustainability at all, and do not connect their faith to sustainability. All participants in this research participated in sustainability activity in one form or another. Including FC members that do not participate would provide information as to why they do not participate or connect faith to sustainability and could possibly point out barriers to their participation. Accessing this information would only provide an overall view of what is happening in FCs on both sides of the spectrum.

A multi-level approach to future research would also allow for a better understanding of what is happening at levels above congregational FCs. Such research would provide a better understanding of how information is successfully or unsuccessfully communicated to FCs. This would also provide information on how that level is connecting faith to sustainability, and how their role is being utilized. Insight into what programs are available at this level and how these programs were created could also be useful.

7.8 Concluding thoughts

I attended Sunday service several times at both UUCW and St. Ignatius throughout my research. Prior to this research, I do not have much experience participating in any faith communities. I found this position put me at an advantage in some regards and a disadvantage in others. One advantage is that I went into this research without any strong connections, or associated bias, in regard to any faith community, allowing perhaps for a fresh and broader view when discussing faith and sustainability with faith communities. However, I was at a disadvantage because I did not come in with a wealth of knowledge about faith and the faith communities I studied. I have attempted to compensate for any shortcomings by asking questions, journaling about my own experiences and feelings within these faith communities, and by reading what I could.

Although both UUCW and St. Ignatius experienced barriers to sustainability engagement, both have accomplished great things in their respective faith communities. For example, the EC at St. Ignatius implemented a new waste management system for the Parish coupled with waste education for parishioners. On the surface this might seem simple or small, but the change was a huge accomplishment. The EC worked hard to remove disposable items and replace them with reusable items and educate parishioners on how to properly use compost and recycling. The EC

committed several years to this effort and despite the success there are still some individuals who do not use the system properly. This shows both the level of resistance and level of commitment a single community can face.

Sustainability work in these faith communities clearly does contribute to the overall sustainability activity in Canada and likely does so in many other instances throughout the country. This research provided insight into the kinds of things individuals are learning in FCs, how individuals are learning, and how knowledge is mobilized. This confirms that FCs in Canada are playing an important role in the broader environmental movement. If more information was available on the sustainability activity of more FCs across Canada, more FCs could partner and expand their network. Faith communities in Canada can act as a sustainability resource, contribute to sustainability education, and have potential to expand their sustainability network. Opening the dialogue on Canadian faith communities and sustainability has the possibility to create further opportunities for learning and action.

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Appendix I Qualitative Questionnaire

Contributions to Sustainability Practices of Faith Communities in Canada

Researcher: Justine Gabrielle Backer, Masters student at the Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

Note: This qualitative questionnaire will be administered online through survey monkey. Individuals will first be taken to a page with the following information:

Invitation to Participate

Thank you for agreeing to participate. This questionnaire will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. Please review the following project information.

Researcher: Justine Backer

Natural Resource Management Graduate student at the Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba.

Advisor: Dr. John Sinclair

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to describe environmental engagement and action, such as environmental education, green building initiatives, or political advocacy, of faith-based communities in Canada at congregational levels, and to understand relationships among learning and action embedded in such activities.

Procedures: Your participation will involve the completion of a web-based qualitative questionnaire exploring environmental and/or sustainability programs, practices, and actions in your faith community. The questionnaire will take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time. We are inviting members of your faith community to participate. Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding the research at any time.

Funded by: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)

Potential Risks: I do not anticipate that your participation in this research should expose you to any risks beyond those you experience in the course of your work and daily life.

Potential Benefits: Participants will likely benefit from the opportunity to reflect on the activities and engagement of their institution in environmental concerns.

Confidentiality: Participation in this questionnaire is anonymous. You can choose to contact the researcher directly to request a copy of the results.

Storage of Data: Questionnaire data will be stored on a password protected computer accessible only to the researcher

Right to Withdraw: Your participation is voluntary. You may exit the survey at any time. However, once you complete the questionnaire and you click ‘submit’, it is no longer possible to withdraw your input.

Follow up: A summary of results will be available once the project is complete. The anticipated date of project completion is September, 2018.

Questions or Concerns: Please contact the researcher with any questions or concerns with the information above.

Consent: By completing and submitting the questionnaire, your **free and informed consent is implied** and indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study.

Please answer to the best of your ability. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Note: Once the participant clicks ‘Next’ they will be taken to the questionnaire:

Qualitative Questionnaire

1. What sustainability/environmental programs or events are you aware of in your faith community? (For example, recycling/composting, environmental education, lecture series, etc.)

2.
 - a. What sustainability/environmental programs or events have you participated in through your faith community? (For example, recycling/composting, environmental education, lecture series, etc.)

 - b. Does your congregation have an environmental committee? (Circle one)
 - i. Yes

- ii. No
 - iii. Unsure
 - c. Do you participate in the environmental committee? (Circle one)
 - i. Yes
 - ii. No
- 3.
- a. Have you implemented any sustainability/environmental activities that you learned through your faith community at home/in your daily life? (For example, composting). (Circle one)
 - i. Yes
 - ii. No.
 - b. If yes, which activities?
- 4.
- a. Were you involved in environmental/sustainability activities prior to the work in your faith community? (Circle one)
 - i. Yes
 - ii. No
 - b. If yes, what were you involved in?
- c. Does this work outside your faith community continue?
- 5.
- a. Have you, or anyone you know in your faith community, organized an environmental/sustainability event or activity based on what you/they learned in your congregation?
 - i. Yes
 - ii. No
 - b. If you have not organized, have you participated in one of these events?
 - i. Yes
 - ii. No
6. Was your Faith part of your motivation to participate in the environmental/sustainability activities? If possible, please explain whether yes or no.
7. Why is environmental/sustainability work important in your faith community?

8. Is there anything else you would like to add about the environmental/sustainability activities and actions of your faith community?

9. I plan on working further with your congregation to learn more about the environmental/sustainability activities you are undertaking. If you are willing to participate in an interview, please provide the contact information of your choice below.

Please contact me for an interview using the following method:

Email:

Phone:

***PLEASE RETURN YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE ***

Appendix II Interview Guide

Researcher: Justine Gabrielle Backer, Masters student, Natural Resource Institute at the University of Manitoba

Introduction:

Hello, thank you for agreeing to sit down with me for this interview. I am exploring contributions to sustainability of faith communities in Canada, and related learning outcomes. I am using this research to write a thesis at the Natural Resources Institute at the University of Manitoba. I will be talking to people in faith communities to discuss their experiences with sustainability programs and practices in their faith community, and how participating in such programs has affected them. action.

This research intends to expand on current research on faith communities and their activities regarding the environment and sustainability. The purpose of this research is to describe environmental engagement and action, such as environmental education, green building initiatives, or political advocacy, of faith-based communities in Canada at congregational levels, and to understand relationships among learning and action embedded in such activities.

If at any point during the interview you need me to repeat anything or have anything clarified, please let me know. If you do not feel comfortable answering a question, we can skip it at any point during the interview. Also, take as much time as you need to pause and think about a question before you respond. Do you have any questions before we start?

Introduction questions:

1. How long have you been involved in your faith community?
2. Have you taken on any specific roles in the community? (If so, what role).
3. What environmental/sustainability activities of the community do you, or have you, engaged in? (What environmental/sustainability activities do you or have you participated in at the church?)
 - a. social justice
4. In your opinion, what are the most important environmental/sustainability activities your faith community has undertaken?
5. What does sustainability mean to you? How did you arrive at this understanding?
 - a. How has this changed?
6. Did your faith community help shape this understanding?

Opportunities for Learning:

7. In the programs/practices described in your organization, are their opportunities for:
 - i. Discussion (talking about a topic)
 - ii. Hands on application (learning by doing)
 - iii. If so, did either of these facilitate your own learning?

8. How has participating in (sustainability) activities influenced how you think about the environment/sustainability? Has it changed?
 Use as a prompt question If repeats answers, skip.
 - a. Have you changed your own behaviour? If so, what actions have resulted?
9. How have you applied this in your home?
10. Have you shared any (anything you've learned) of these with others? What kind of opportunities are available to share and work on ideas?
11. If you already acted sustainably, did activities in your faith community strengthen that relationship? Build upon it? How?
12. How does the congregation engage in environmental issues? Are they receptive?
13. Are there opportunities to:
 - a. Acquire new skills/build on old skills – if so, any examples...
 - b. Learn new information/knowledge – if so, any examples
 - c. Explore different perspectives/share perspectives with others – if so, any examples

Collective action:

14. Do any of the activities (in the Church) encourage collective action (action taken by a group) by the congregation? If so what sorts of action and how was it facilitated? –
15. How does the Environment/Sustainability Committee function – how does it share ideas with the congregation – how does it promote collective action?
16. Do you – or the faith community interact directly with local or national ENGOs? If so, which – If not, why do you think this is? (Do you know of any effective local ENGOs?)
 - a. Does the faith community partner with any other churches or organizations?
17. What could be changed to engage more people to take action?
18. Are environmental activities integrated across the congregation? Or does it just come from the Environmental committee/Green Action Committee?
19. Do you think change in your community comes (or will come) from the bottom up or top down?

Faith worldview and sustainability actions:

20. Do you engage in sustainability activities because of your faith - or primarily due to other reasons?
21. How does your faith influence your environmental/sustainability engagement?
 - a. Does this influence what activities you choose to be part of?
22. Are there any barriers between engaging in sustainability activities and your faith? If so, what are they?
23. Have you ever felt that environmental issues are explained differently in faith communities versus secular areas? How, if so – and does this change how people react to the environmental issues?
24. What role do you think faith communities play (or should play) in the environmental movement?

Example) Literature talks about faith communities as having high potential for participating in the environmental movement, what do you think that potential is? Why do you think a faith community has high potential?

25. If you had the ability to do more, what would you do?
26. Is there anything else you would like to add (Point out? Or comment on?) in relation to faith and environmental/sustainability work or this interview.
27. Is there anything you would suggest I look at or someone I should talk to?
Programs/individuals

Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me. I will be continuing to interview and work with people from the faith community on this topic. If at any point you would like to discuss anything with me, please contact me.

Notes: Try to tease out where/how they have learned, and for the action component and how they are sharing with others.

Appendix III Consent Forms

INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS



NATURAL RESOURCES INSTITUTE

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http://www.umanitoba.ca/institutes/natural_resources/

Research Project Title: Contributions to Sustainability of Faith Communities in Canada

Principal Investigator:

Justine Backer

Natural Resources Institute

Research Supervisor:

John Sinclair

Natural Resources Institute

Sponsor: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Project summary: This study is part of requirements to complete a Masters degree in Natural Resources Management at the Natural Resources Institute at the University of Manitoba. My thesis project is titled, *Contributions to Sustainability of Faith Communities in Canada*, and will focus on education programs and levels of environmental engagement of faith communities in

Canada. Literature suggests that faith communities are in a unique position to motivate and engage large audiences, they have a strong set of resources, and a strong set of values that link individuals. Therefore, this research intends to expand on current research on faith communities and their activities regarding the environment and sustainability. The purpose of this research is to describe environmental engagement and action, such as environmental education, green building initiatives, or political advocacy, of faith-based communities in Canada at congregational levels, and to understand relationships among learning and action embedded in such activities. I plan to document participation in environmental education, environmental engagement, and opportunities for learning by conducting surveys, interviews, observation and analysis.

What you are consenting to: You are invited to participate in an interview lasting approximately 60-75 minutes in a location of your choice. The interview will inquire into your experience in environmental learning and action in your faith community. If you consent, the interview will be recorded with an audio-recording device, and written notes will be taken during the interview. You may withdraw your consent at any time (even after the interview is over) before August 1st, 2018, at which point it will be impossible to exclude your data. You may withdraw consent by contacting the researcher with the contact information provided and informing them you would like to withdraw. If you choose to withdraw, I will immediately destroy your recordings and transcripts.

Confidentiality: Any information collected from this interview is confidential and will only be used with your full consent. Personal information and data collected will only be accessed by the researcher, and your identity will not be revealed in any publications or distribution of the research. While confidentiality will always be maintained, some of your words may be used in research. All interview recordings, transcripts, and notes will be stored in a password protected computer in a locked case. I expect the project to be completed by September, 2018. All information will be deleted within a period of 5 years once the project is completed.

Anticipated risk and benefits: I do not anticipate that your participation in this research should expose you to any risks beyond those you experience in the course of your work and daily life. Throughout the interview, you may choose to skip any question you do not wish to answer, and you may withdraw from this research at any time. As stated, you can withdraw by informing the researcher that you no longer wish to participate in the study. There are no negative consequences for withdrawing. The benefits of participating in this study include contributing to a better understanding of how the faith community is contributing to sustainability. Participants will likely benefit from the opportunity to reflect on the activities and engagement of their institution in environmental concerns. More broadly, they may benefit from their environmental commitments being recognized in publications and research presentations, facilitating connections between faith institutions, and helping to overcome widespread negative assumptions about the relationship between faith and the environment.

Debriefing: Once data collection is complete, the interview transcript will be sent to you via email, or the contact mechanism of your choice, for you to review. You are not required to review the interview. If you review the interview transcript, you may confirm and verify information you shared during the interview, and add any additional comments you think are

important that you did not discuss in the interview. If at any point you would like to discuss this information, you may contact the researcher.

Research timeline: Data collection (questionnaire, interviews, focus groups, observation) is expected to occur in winter, 2018. During the data collection timeline, I may contact you with follow up questions, or to clarify information you provided in the interview.

Dissemination: The information will be distributed in a Master's thesis, academic publications, and presentations. The Master's thesis will be available online on the University of Manitoba Natural Resources Institute website, and any academic publications will be available in the selected Journal or on the corresponded website. You may request a copy of my research findings at any time.

Questions: If you have any questions at any time, please contact me or my advisor (contact information on the first page).

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Joint-Faculty of Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator at 204-474-7122 or humanethics@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

I, _____, consent with my signature to this recorded interview.

Participant's printed name

Participant's signature

____/____/____ (dd/mm/yyyy)

Date

Researcher's Signature

____/____/____ (dd/mm/yyyy)

Date

If you would like to be contacted with the results, please provide the contact method of your choice. Your contact information will only be used to send you study results or ask follow-up questions.

Email:

Phone:

Address:

I, _____, choose not to be anonymous and give my consent for my name and details to be used.

Participant's signature

____/____/____ (dd/mm/yyyy)

Date

____/____/____ (dd/mm/yyyy)

Thank you for your time.

INFORMED CONSENT FOR QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANTS



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Research Project Title: Contributions to Sustainability of Faith Communities in Canada

Principal Investigator:

Justine Backer

Natural Resources Institute

Research Supervisor:

John Sinclair

Natural Resources Institute

Sponsor: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Project summary: This study is part of requirements to complete a Masters degree in Natural Resources Management at the Natural Resources Institute at the University of Manitoba. My thesis project is titled, *Contributions to Sustainability of Faith Communities in Canada*, and will focus on education programs and levels of environmental engagement of faith communities in Canada. Literature suggests that faith communities are in a unique position to motivate and engage large audiences, they have a strong set of resources, and a strong set of values that link individuals. Therefore, this research intends to expand on current research on faith communities

and their activities regarding the environment and sustainability. The purpose of this research is to describe environmental engagement and action, such as environmental education, green building initiatives, or political advocacy, of faith-based communities in Canada at congregational levels, and to understand relationships among learning and action embedded in such activities. I have four objectives in order to achieve this purpose: To explore pro-environmental/sustainability actions taken by individuals and collectively by members of faith-based communities; To examine opportunities for learning about environmental/sustainability issues and actions within faith-based communities; To consider the relationships among faith community worldviews and the environmental/sustainability actions they are engaged in, with particular attention to connections between faith and environmental values; and, To develop a framework describing the relationships among faith, learning, and pro-environmental social action across selected faith-based organizations in Canada. In order to achieve all four objectives, I plan to document participation in environmental education, environmental engagement, and opportunities for learning by conducting surveys, interviews, observation and analysis.

What you are consenting to: Your participation will involve the completion of a web-based qualitative questionnaire exploring environmental and/or sustainability programs, practices, and actions in your faith community. The questionnaire will take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time. We are inviting members of your faith community to participate. Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding the research at any time. Please note at the end of the questionnaire you will be given the option to be contacted for an interview.

Your participation is voluntary. You may withdraw by exiting the survey at any time. However, once you complete the questionnaire and you click 'submit', it is no longer possible to withdraw your input.

Confidentiality: Participation in this questionnaire is anonymous. If you choose to provide your contact information for an interview, your information will be kept confidential. Personal information and data collected will only be accessed by the researcher, and your identity will not be revealed in any publications or distribution of the research. You can choose to contact the researcher directly to request a copy of the results. I expect the project to be completed by September, 2018. All information will be deleted within a period of 5 years once the project is completed.

Anticipated risk and benefits: I do not anticipate that your participation in this research should expose you to any risks beyond those you experience in the course of your work and daily life. You may withdraw from this research at any time. There are no negative consequences for withdrawing. The benefits of participating in this study include contributing to a better understanding of how the faith community is contributing to sustainability. Participants will likely benefit from the opportunity to reflect on the activities and engagement of their institution in environmental concerns. More broadly, they may benefit from their environmental commitments being recognized in publications and research presentations, facilitating connections between faith institutions, and helping to overcome widespread negative assumptions about the relationship between faith and the environment.

Debriefing: If at any point you would like to discuss this information, you may contact the researcher.

Research timeline: Data collection (questionnaire, interviews, focus groups, observation) is expected to occur in winter, 2018.

Dissemination: The information will be distributed in a Master's thesis, academic publications, and presentations. The Master's thesis will be available online on the University of Manitoba Natural Resources Institute website, and any academic publications will be available in the selected Journal or on the corresponded website. You may request a copy of my research findings at any time.

Questions: If you have any questions at any time, please contact me or my advisor (contact information above).

By completing this survey, it indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

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