



Green Note March 18, 2026; Making Our Voices Heard!

1. Good news: the forsythia at foot of the bell tower right by one of our new heat pumps is in bloom—a joyful sign of spring, despite this week's blustery atmospheric river.

We have good news about the heat pumps, too. The 2026 January/February hydro bill shows a very welcome drop of about 40% in our cost and emissions from the same period in 2025, even taking into account any differences between the two periods in weather conditions. We expect that our electricity consumption will continue to decrease as we turn off more baseboard heaters and get protocols in place for operating the heat pumps. Bruce Pond and Mike Starr are working on the protocols—many thanks to them for this, and for all their work on getting the heat pumps installed.

2. Name change! St Hilda's has long benefitted from members' actions in caring for the environment, so when the Green Parish Action Group formed in 2021 it was building on an established tradition. We didn't give much thought to adopting the name GPAG, but it seemed to work—until now! It turns out that the Sunshine Coast has another GPAG: the Gibsons Public Art Gallery, and they even have their own domain name: <https://gpag.ca/>.



To prevent confusion, we are changing our name to Green Parish Action Team, or GPAT. Since we often refer to ourselves as the "Green Team" anyway, this small but vital change seems to make sense, and we hope you agree.

3. Climate Hushing. You will surely have noticed how the climate emergency has dropped out of much public discourse these days.

As business professor Anjali Chaudhry writes, the science on the climate emergency points unequivocally to "its impacts affecting ecosystems, food systems, migration patterns, supply chains, financial markets, and geopolitical stability itself." Chaudhry goes on, "And yet this year," at the World Economic Forum in January 2026 "attention shifted toward issues that are undeniably urgent but, one may argue are derivative of or amplified by climate risk

[emphasis mine]. The silence on climate underscores a sobering reality: even when global leaders convene under a banner of dialogue, it remains the hardest conversation—precisely because it requires confronting deep value conflicts, political pressure, and uncomfortable tradeoffs (see her article at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/anjalichaudhry/2026/01/24/davos-leaders-silence-on-climate-speaks-volumeswhy-this-is-a-risk/>).

Canadian climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe calls this silence “climate hushing” (“[Climate hushing](https://www.talkingclimate.ca)”—the quiet trend undermining global climate action [talkingclimate.ca](https://www.talkingclimate.ca)) and points out that at such a time as this, having conversations about climate change is more important than ever. To get started on these hard conversations, Katharine recommends beginning “with common ground - rather than where we typically begin our conversations, with something we disagree with them about, or something we’re worried about and we don’t think they are (but they should be). Those types of conversations rarely go well. Instead, a great place to begin is by focusing on how climate change is affecting a place you both live in, care about, or visit often. Shared experiences make the issue feel real and relevant. You can mention one of the crazy weather events that happened this year . . . then bring in some of the other changes that have been happening [on the Sunshine Coast], and how they are affecting people’s homes, livelihoods, or health.”

Such as . . .

4. Climate resilience on the Sunshine Coast and in BC

Based on reports from the District of Sechelt and the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD), our main local climate vulnerabilities include:

- Coastal flooding and sea level rise
- Water shortages and drought
- Extreme rainfall and storms
- Wildfire risk and air quality
- Geotechnical hazards
- Impacts on infrastructure and ecosystems

Katharine Hayhoe’s most recent Talking Climate newsletter showcases “Indigenous-led Ocean Protection in Canada, and specifically talks about British Columbia: <https://www.talkingclimate.ca/p/indigenous-led-ocean-protection-in>. She says, “Protecting coastal ecosystems on land and in the ocean builds climate resilience for both people and nature.” This comment fits nicely with a *Coast Reporter* article from this week on an even more local effort: https://www.coastreporter.net/in-the-community/waters-of-kalpilinpender-harbour-come-alive-with-herring-spawn-11998096#google_vignette.

In future Green Notes we will be talking more about our local climate resilience, and what groups—municipal, commercial, and non-profit—are doing to reduce our vulnerabilities. Talking with others about these efforts can be a way in which we break the current silence and help make our voices heard.

Joining a prayer vigil can help do that too.

5. Prayer Vigils for Climate Justice: As you will have seen in our recent Sunday Bulletins, on Tuesdays during Lent February 24-March 31, the BC Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (including our friend Louis Giguere of Living Faith Lutheran Church) is organizing a prayer vigil at 5pm Pacific time for 30 minutes by Zoom. You can find out more, and a registration link, here: <https://bcsynod.org/events/prayer-vigils-for-climate-justice-lent-2026/2026-03-10> and also see the poster in the breezeway.

With thanks to everyone for your concern and support, and for your help in keeping the climate emergency to the forefront of our attention,

Christine

