

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S CARBON FOOTPRINT

The carbon footprint of the 139th General Assembly (2013) was 140.3 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Since 2010 The Presbyterian Church in Canada has calculated its carbon footprint for travel to General Assembly. Calculating the carbon emissions from a commissioner's travel to GA provides baseline information that helps the church discern how to be wiser creation caretakers. This resource is a guide for General Assembly commissioners, and members of congregations and presbyteries who wish to engage in a symbolic community response to climate change. Travel emissions are not a complete account of General Assembly's carbon footprint. It does not include venue energy consumption, water use, food or waste. For more information on GA's carbon footprint please see Justice Ministries' report to the 140<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

## WHAT THIS GUIDE WILL DO

This guide helps GA commissioners calculate their approximate carbon emissions travelling to GA. It provides suggestions and ideas for *symbolic community* responses to offset these emissions. Some commissioners must fly to attend the GA. Recognizing this, Presbyterians are invited to reduce their personal carbon emissions to offset emissions equivalent to the *average* carbon footprint of GA participants (including commissioners, resource people and guests). The average footprint in 2013 was 0.41 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Participants can walk, bike or take public transit to work, school or church). The 2014 GA carbon footprint will be reported to the 141<sup>th</sup> GA (2015).

## CALCULATE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT



### IF YOU ARE DRIVING TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Use this equation:

**DISTANCE (KILOMETRES) X MULTIPLIER (SEE CHART FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF VEHICLES) = EMISSIONS**

EXAMPLE: A commissioner driving a minivan from Windsor, Ontario to Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo for the 140th GA) will drive approximately 584 km, roundtrip. To calculate the carbon emissions for this trip, multiply the distance traveled by the multiplier for

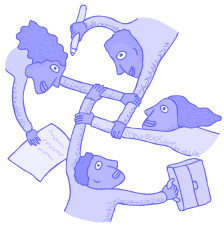
Type of Car	Multiplier
Hybrid	0.1262
Sub-compact (Focus or Corolla)	0.183
Compact (Fusion or Accord)	0.2162
Minivan	0.2964
Truck or SUV	0.3103

**584 km (distance) x 0.2964 (multiplier for a minivan) = 173.1 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e or 0.1731 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e.**

### IF YOU ARE FLYING TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

To calculate the greenhouse gas emissions from flights, please use the online carbon calculator "Atmosfair" at <https://www.atmosfair.de/en/emissions-calculator/>. This calculator is recommended because of its accuracy. This is not an endorsement of the offsetting program. To use Atmosfair's carbon calculator, input your departure and destination airports; the tool will calculate your carbon emissions.





## RESPOND AS A COMMUNITY

Do this activity (calculating your carbon footprint) with your session, presbytery, mission and outreach team, or youth group. Calculate the footprint of your GA commissioner. Note that the average carbon footprint of GA participants in 2013 was 0.41 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. For comparison, calculate the footprint of local distances you travel each day or week. How far do you travel to church? To work? To visit family or friends? How far did you travel on your last vacation? **Remember this is a symbolic response.**

## NOW WHAT? NEXT STEPS

### IF YOU ARE A COMMISSIONER

Calculate your carbon footprint to General Assembly. Include this information in your report to presbytery.

Ask your session, congregation or presbytery to commit to one activity over the summer that offsets their personal carbon emissions. Set a collective target equal to the average footprint of GA participants (0.41 tonnes). Everyone contributes in some way to reaching this goal (or another goal agreed upon by the group).

Possible activities may include walking to church on Sunday (or several Sundays), walking, taking a bus or carpooling to work, church or the grocery store.

Encourage people to view this activity as a symbolic response to climate change. Share what you do with Justice Ministries.

Advocacy must be a part of our response to climate change and individuals, organizations and governments all have a role to play if catastrophic climate change is to be averted.

### IF YOU WANT TO SUPPORT YOUR GA COMMISSIONER

If you don't know who the commissioners from your congregation or presbytery are, ask your representative elder.

Contact your GA commissioner. Tell the commissioner you are praying for him or her. Explain that you would like to organize a community response to offset the carbon emissions from the commissioner's travel to GA as a part of a caring for creation initiative. Invite them to be a part of the initiative.

Set a schedule of possible activities: walk to church on a Sunday (or several Sundays), walk, bike, bus or carpool to work, church, the grocery store.

Encourage people not *just* to go for a pleasure walks, but to *change* some part of their daily or weekly routine.

Report your activities to GA commissioners, session and presbytery.

SHARE YOUR INITIATIVES WITH JUSTICE MINISTRIES (Kmasterton@presbyterian.ca)

*Celebrate first steps. Plan second steps. Pray for God's strength and guidance. Be patient (with yourself and with your community). Our actions and decisions about how we live in God's creation are an integral part of how we honour God as Creator. In Christ, all things are made new. This is Christ's Good News to us. Amen.*

Justice Ministries, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, April 2014



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Presbytery \_\_\_\_\_

Distance Driven (roundtrip, in km) \_\_\_\_\_ Did you car pool? (who with?) \_\_\_\_\_

Flights (if applicable) Departure airport \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival airport \_\_\_\_\_

Carbon emissions from travel (see page 1 to calculate your carbon footprint) \_\_\_\_\_ kg of CO<sub>2</sub>

**Commissioners please detach and return this section with your General Assembly evaluation form. Thank you for participating.**