




Environmental Stewardship in Faith Communities

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- Many faith communities are finding an imperative for practicing environmental stewardship, based in:
 - Faith
 - Doctrine
 - Moral responsibility
 - Environmental stewardship must involve changes by individuals. Faith communities are natural places to foster change.




Four topics this afternoon...

- How to get started
- UUI's experience and the Green Sanctuary model
- Efforts of other Indianapolis congregations
- Reflections



UUA Green Sanctuary Program Goals

- To build awareness of societal environmental issues.
- To generate commitment for personal lifestyle changes.
- To motivate people to community action on environmental issues.
- To build a connection between spiritual practice and environmental consciousness.
- To build awareness of and rectify environmental injustices.

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- UUA Green Sanctuary has been around since 2002
 - There are 78 congregations all around the country that have been accredited
 - The UU denominational organization has resources to assist congregations going through the process
 - www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/greensanctuary/index.shtml



A structured process...

- Establish a committee that's broadly representative
- Do an environmental assessment
- Develop an action plan, with feedback from UUA
- Apply for GS candidacy
- Implement action plan, modify as appropriate along the way
- Seek accreditation
- Be green forever!



Program Elements

- Worship and Celebration
- Religious Education
- Environmental Justice
- Sustainable Living

Churches must commit to 12 activities in these 4 areas

■ How did we start?

- In 2006, a committed group of individuals wrote a charter and got approval from governing board and congregation
- We did a congregational survey to assess awareness and how “green” we already were in our personal lives
 - 10% purchased Green Power, 50% recycled batteries; 40% recycled cardboard, for example.
- We did a survey of our physical plant
 - Energy audit, grounds audit, utilities usage





- We developed a plan

- Worship, spiritual practice and/or community celebration:

- Four services dedicated to the environment
 - Month-long art show—It's Great to be Green—emphasizing use of recycled materials and environmental themes


- Religious Education:

- Environmental film series
 - Development of curriculum for Youth RE
 - One book, one church
 - Discussion groups focused on The Great Turning



□ Sustainable Living/Church Operations

- Reduce waste, increase use of recycled materials, and increase recycling opportunities for our community and the surrounding neighborhood
- Household journey to sustainability (Earth Points program)
- Reduce energy and water use in our buildings
- Generate a positive environmental impact from our property (reduce pesticide and water use, become certified as Wildlife Sanctuary)

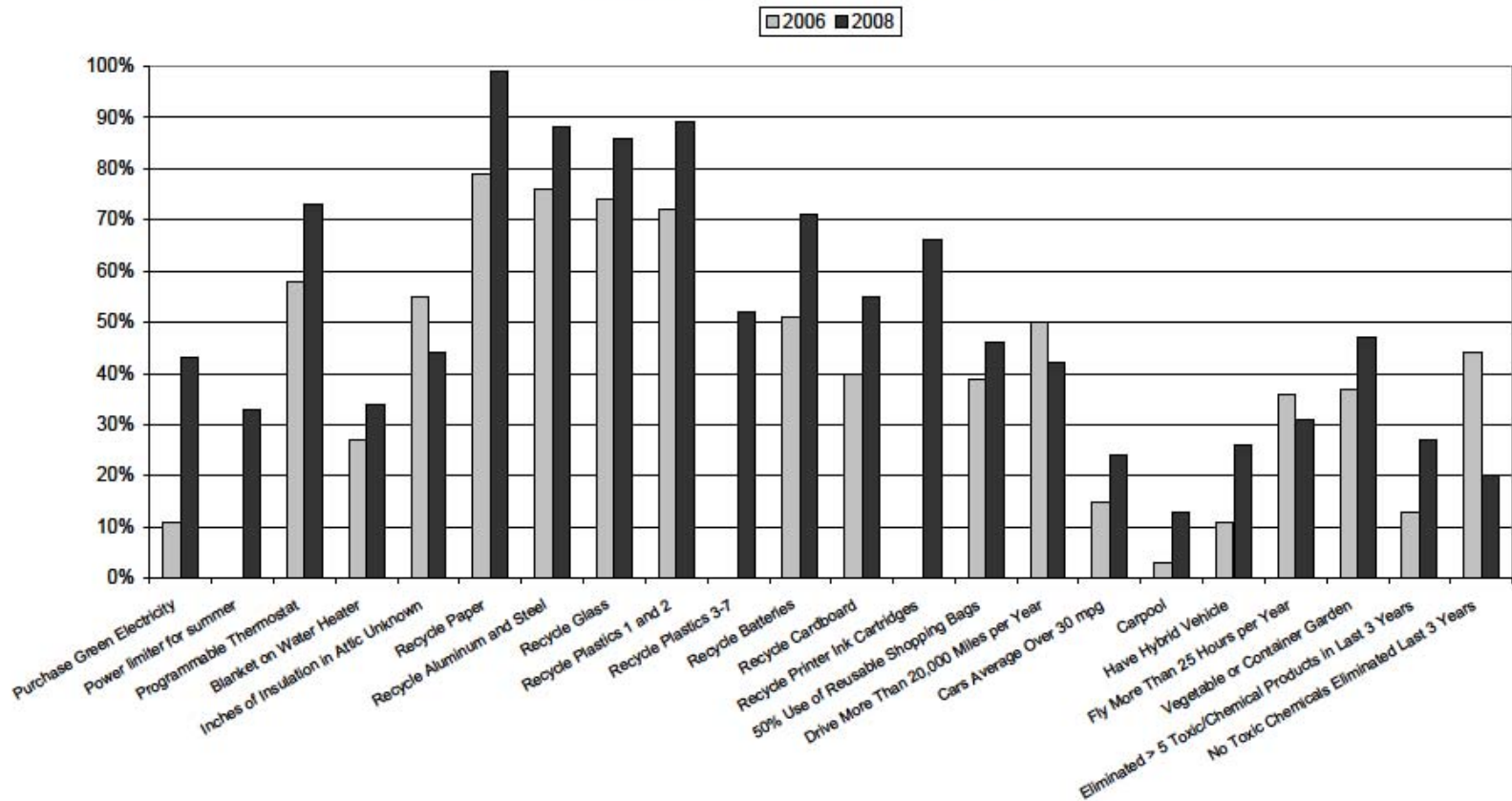
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- Environmental Justice, impact on the wider community
 - Bibliography of environmentally themed books, movies, etc. for children to be developed and made available
 - Host a workshop for area congregations on Green Sanctuary
 - Our first workshop was in December 2006; a second was held in 2007 at request of congregations



Where is UUI now?

- In June 2008, we received accreditation
 - Internal impacts: energy savings, green power, adoption of Board policy on minimizing waste and creation of standing committee on sustainability. MORE TO DO!
 - Community impacts: role in assisting/inspiring other churches
 - Congregational impacts: results of second survey show improvement in all areas of people's lives
 - Most significant impact identified by members is that awareness has been raised

UUI Green Sanctuary Survey 2006 and 2008 Results



In addition to our twelve actions...

- We designed a logo
- We have an item in every monthly newsletter
- We have information on the website






Greening Congregations in Central Indiana

- There are now at least 30 congregations in Indianapolis, that I know of, with active environmental stewardship programs.
- The movement is really catching hold and making a difference.



Examples of specific actions

- Survey of physical plant
 - Energy use, water use, chemical use, waste generation
- Green Art Show
- Green-themed worship services
- Congregational survey
- Recycle cans and cardboard from annual fish fry (Epworth Methodist)
- Environmental film series (open to the community)
- Green tips in church bulletin
- Green fashion show
- Host programs such as “Low carbon diet”

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- Develop environmental policy for church operations
 - Field trips
 - Tree planting
 - Wildlife Sanctuary Certification for grounds
 - Provide recycling location for church, church members and the community
 - “90 in 90” – St. Luke’s United Methodist
 - Household journey: Earth Points
 - Count the bicycles (or hybrid cars) in the parking lot
 - Green Sanctuary workshops
 - Native landscaping plan
 - Produce shopping bags



UUI Green Sanctuary Earth Points Pledge

You Can Make a Difference Now!

UUI's goal is to have as many households as possible earn at least 365 Earth Points between Earth Day 2007 and Earth Day 2008

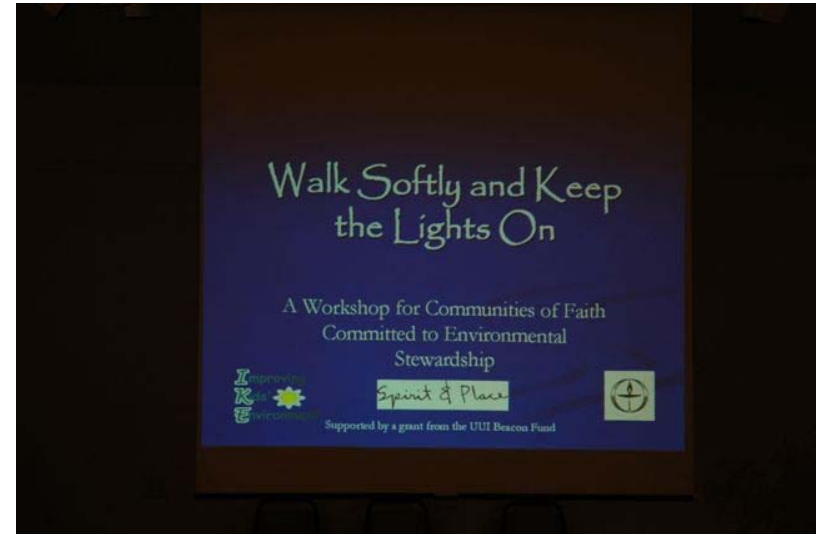
Take the pledge: I commit that during the next 365 days, I will take action to reduce my impact on the earth's natural resources, increase my own and others' awareness of our impact on the natural world, and otherwise actively practice environmental stewardship at home and at work. I recognize that even small actions can make a difference.

Category/Action	Already Doing	Will Start Now	By End of Year	Possible Points	Points Earned
Waste Reduction					
Bring your own bags to the grocery or other stores				1 per trip	
Use cloth napkins instead of paper; dish towels instead of paper				1/week	
Reuse scrap paper, start double-siding				5	
Have your name taken off third class mailing lists				5	
Start composting kitchen waste				5	
Stop using paper plates, cups and disposable utensils				5	
Bring your own coffee mug to your favorite coffee shop				5	
Other					

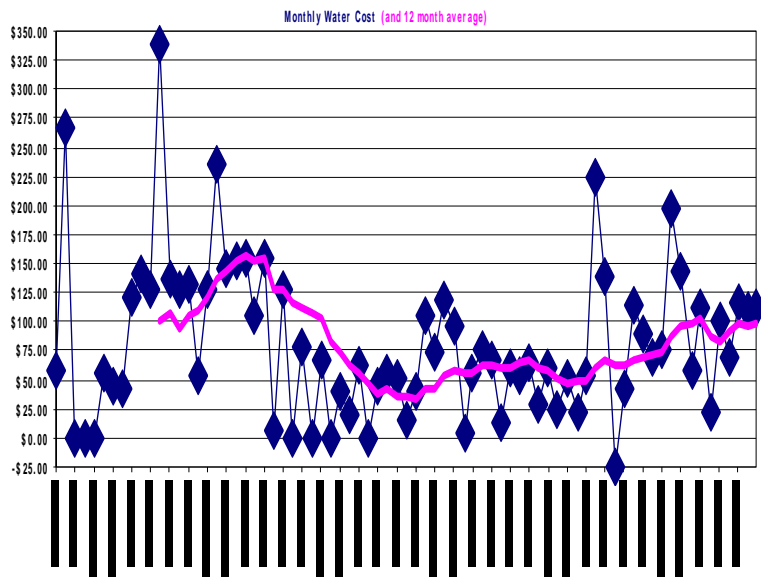


**St. Luke's United
Methodist Church**

UUI Green Sanctuary Workshop



UUI Green Art Show



UUI Tracking Water Usage



Installing double-paned windows at Bethlehem Lutheran




The movement is growing...


- Thirty congregations in central Indiana doing *something* on environmental stewardship
 - Diverse denominations
 - At various stages of effort
- Interfaith Alliance Indianapolis Care for Creation Committee also providing support



Reflections and tips for success

- The Green Sanctuary program gave us structure, kept us moving on a timeframe
 - Do as much or as little as you can
 - Everyone shares
- The effort has drawn on and drawn out creativity and diverse talents and interests—there's something for everyone
- The challenge is to make green practices a part of doing business, not something a special committee is promoting
- Many things are zero-cost, but when you have to spend \$\$.....

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- Sharing our experience and tools has been extremely rewarding
 - Don't start with coffee hour
 - Try not to wear people out
 - Document and quantify
 - Energy use graphs
 - Number of bikes on Sunday mornings
 - Earth Points challenge
 - Celebrate and thank

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- Strong committee leadership is important
 - Be efficient with everyone's time
 - It's helpful if your committee has a little spending money
 - Don't reinvent the wheel—take advantage of work that others have done

Resources

- UUA Green Sanctuary program
 - <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/greensanctuary/index.shtml>
- UUI's Website
 - www.uui.org/task_force.html
- Interfaith Alliance Indianapolis Care for Creation Committee
 - <http://www.interfaithindy.org/care>
- IKE website
 - www.ikecoalition.org/Green_Sanctuary/Green_Sanctuary.htm