

## **Earth Care in Facilities**

### **Office and paper products**

- Use recycled, chlorine-free office paper and envelopes, including stationery.
- Set guidelines for reducing paper use for office, worship, and education (use both sides).
- Limit photocopying to only the number needed and only if actual paper copies are required.
- Recycle all paper, cardboard, glass, plastic, steel, aluminum as recycled by your municipality.
- Provide handy paper recycling bins in various rooms, each classroom, choir room and hallways.
- Provide bin, box or other container outside sanctuary for recycling bulletins.
- Use refilled/ recycled ink and toner cartridges when feasible.
- Proper disposal of batteries and all electronics, - computers, printers, copiers.
- Limit mailings/ use e-mail.
- Cut down on junk mail. Notify senders.
- Unplug computers/ printers/ coffee makers/ microwaves when not in use.
- Use post-consumer recycled paper products for napkins, hand towels, toilet paper.

### **Recycling and Re-use**

- Assess what you buy and the packaging involved. Pre-cycle!
- Consider reuse as option one, especially in art projects.
- Consider a convenient recycling center in the church for cell phones, printer cartridges, household batteries, eye glasses, plastic film, gym shoes, etc.
- Provide recycling information to members for home use (including toxic disposal).

### **Coffee hour, receptions, congregational meals and food use**

- Eliminate Styrofoam.
- Reduce or eliminate single-use plastic and disposable paper products.
- Avoid plastic disposable water bottles. Serve from pitchers.
- Provide mug rack with reusable mugs for coffee.
- Encourage people to bring their own plates, cups, and utensils to meals.
- Provide/collect ceramic plates and cups, glassware, and stainless-steel utensils.
- Purchase efficient Energy Star appliances when making replacements.
- Use eco-safe dish-washing detergents and cleansers.
- Use dishwasher only when full.
- Minimize waste from food or paper/ plastic products.
- If you cannot eliminate waste, use biodegradable plastic options now available.
- Use biodegradable plastic bags for garbage.
- Consider cloth napkins/ towels with members using laundry facilities at home.
- Establish guidelines for the congregation and for outside groups using facility.
- Unplug microwave, and coffee maker when not in use.
- Get rid of soda machines/ Use refrigerator and honor system.
- Provide healthy/ organic/ locally grown food items for snacks and meals.
- Use Fair-Trade coffee, tea, chocolate, etc.
- Share leftover food. Compost food waste.
- Have a vegetarian potluck. Educate about the environmental impact of meat.
- Sponsor a world hunger meal with beans and rice or other solidarity food.

- Become a drop off point for Community Supported Agriculture.
- Plant an organic, community garden to share produce with local food banks.

### **Energy and water usage**

- Replace or retrofit all incandescent bulbs with LED or compact fluorescent light bulbs, including exit lights.
- Use electric timers and/or motion sensors on indoor and outdoor lights.
- Avoid (high energy) halogen lights.
- Foster practices among members to turn out lights when not in use (use signs).
- Use photovoltaic panels for exterior lighting or church signs.
- Get off the grid with renewable energy: photovoltaic panels or wind mills geothermal, wind, solar (hot water).
- In new construction, seek LEED certification.
- Approve a plan to become carbon neutral.
- Inspect, adjust, and clean all heating and air conditioning systems yearly.
- Remove obstacles from vents and registers.
- Moderate heat throughout building to times and areas of use.
- Use ceiling fans for cooling.
- Raise thermostat for cooling in summer. Lower it in winter.
- Seal air leaks in door, windows, and gaps in the building envelope.
- Insulate walls and ceilings.
- Purchase energy-efficient windows.
- Perform an energy audit of the church building.
- Limit meetings to certain nights/ times for energy consumption
- Insulate hot water pipes and water heater. Use tank-less water heater.
- Fix leaking faucets, drinking fountains and toilets.
- Install low-flush toilets or composting toilets, waterless urinals, and/or low-flow (aerator) faucets and sink sprayers
- Avoid running water unnecessarily.
- Use pressure stops or hand-motion sensors on faucets.

### **Transportation**

- Install bike racks. Encourage walking to church or taking public transportation.
- Organize car pooling for church events.
- Purchase/ use a van to transport people to church.
- Reward church employees for using high-mileage cars.
- Designate car-free Sundays or months for worship.
- Each month have someone check/correct tire pressure of cars in the parking lot.

### **Indoor air quality and cleaning products**

- Test for asbestos, lead, formaldehyde, radon.
- Address issues of mold, mildew, bacteria, and dust mites.
- Avoid volatile organic compounds from certain cleaning products, furnishings, fabrics, carpets, and paints.
- Provide open windows for air circulation.

- Plants inside: entrance, near windows, at the altar, around the baptismal font, in the office, in the narthex and other gathering spaces to bring nature inside and serve as air purifiers.
- Use eco-safe cleansers for restrooms, kitchen, dining areas, floors, and other surfaces.

### **Outdoor church property**

- Landscape with native grass and plants.
- Become a certified Wildlife Habitat (National Wildlife Federation).
- Develop a Monarch Waystation.
- Put in rain gardens and landscaping to absorb runoff. Avoid bare areas.
- Use mulching mower.
- Mulch trees, shrubs, flowers, and gardens.
- Eliminate/minimize pesticides, herbicides, and toxic fertilizer.
- Limit watering lawn. Water at dusk or dawn. Do not water during droughts.
- Use a rain barrel to collect for watering.
- Use down spouts to distribute water for watering plants and absorption.
- Install a roof-top garden.
- Install a grey water system for watering lawn and plants.
- Plant trees.
- Create an indoor or outdoor herb garden.
- Create an outdoor worship space or place of prayer.
- Create a tree sanctuary or memorial garden with benches.
- On an open lot, create a prairie or a small preserve or an orchard.
- Use memorial funds and gifts to dedicate trees and natural spaces.
- Compost yard waste.
- Install permeable surface for parking or walking area.
- Limit size of paved surfaces or eliminate with gravel and wood chips.

### **Resources - Web Addresses**

National Wildlife Federation Wildlife Habitat <https://www.nwf.org/garden-for-wildlife>  
 Information on gardening for pollinators <https://www.pollinator.org/>  
 Monarch Waystation <https://www.monarchwatch.org/waystations/>  
 plastic film recycling for Trex <https://www.trex.com/recycling/recycling-programs/>