

DRAFT (7-14-04)
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick
Environmental Audit

The Green Sanctuary Committee of UUCF began an environmental audit of the congregation at its monthly meeting on June 14, 2004 as part of the process for accreditation as a Green Sanctuary congregation. The Green Sanctuary Committee began the environmental audit process by developing an initial list of current UUCF activities and practices that are likely to impact the environment or influence our congregation's relationship to the earth. The list, based on guidelines in the Green Sanctuary Program manual and an environmental audit process conducted by the Green Team of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the North Hills (available at www.uuaspp.org) is as follows:

1. Energy Use Patterns

- Need to obtain records of electric, propane, and water use from the past year to examine patterns of use
- Committee member will contact CCAN about possibilities for energy audits
- Water faucets in the bathroom have auto shut off, which is good, but can we change the timing of the auto cut-off as the water is often running longer than necessary?
- Energy conservation override system is a plus and the HVAC should be able to be adjusted for use of windows as needed for fresh air as weather permits.
- Can lighting efficiency be improved by use of the CFLs for energy savings? How efficient is current lighting system?
- Signs can be posted in all classrooms to turn off lights when not in use, as we already have in bathrooms (and some classrooms?).
- Aerators in faucets could cut down on water usage if not already installed.
- Windows in chapel and sanctuary -- varying opinions exist on how to cut down on heat and light in the summer while not cutting down on heat benefits in the winter and not adversely affecting the appearance of either chapel or sanctuary. Drawdown shades, thermal covers or window polarized shading film could be investigated to reduce heat loss and to cool building down in summer.

2. Recycling

- No official program exists for recycling glass, paper, aluminum
- County Policies are challenging to say the least. Currently no curbside recycle exists for businesses and the church falls in the category. Dropoff centers state that they are for "household use only."
- Tidy Troupers could be requested to take items home; some do so on their own initiative.

- Efforts have been made to:
 - use recycled and reusable kitchen ware
 - use recycled paper in office
 - purchase used furniture
 - reuse candle wax in new candles
 - minimize use of non disposable items
- Several individuals have been taking recyclables home or to collection point on their own initiative

3. Non-disposable Materials and Cleaning Products

- We use ceramic cups instead of disposable Styrofoam
- Plates: we are awaiting donations of reusable plates
- Cleaning supplies:

Committee sponsored a Green Clean workshop to educate members in green cleaning techniques and supplies.

Currently, Tidy Troupers are requested to purchase their own supplies and get reimbursed by the church. No policies and limited guidance exist for the procurement of environmentally sensitive cleaning supplies.

4. Purchasing Decisions

- Membership Committee buys fair-traded, organic, shade grown coffee for coffee hour.
- Building includes rescued elements from other structures: wood floor in chapel, stained glass windows
- Budget was provided to purchase Fair Trade coffee for resale as fund-raiser.
- No official policies regarding green purchases for office, kitchen, or RE programs.

5. Landscaping Policies

- Changed architect's landscaping plans from including many non-native to mostly native species.
- Green Sanctuary Committee members provided persistent input to Landscaping Committee on beneficial effect of native species and landscaping plans include use of native species of trees and shrubs.
- There is a designated tract of land on UUCF property to develop into a native plant garden and wildlife habitat.
- An area above the septic field will be transformed into a wildflower meadow to cut down on mowing.
- Gravel area of the parking lot is semi-permeable thereby reducing the amount of run-off. Some of parking area is impermeable.

- Two Master Gardener Programs were run to educate members on wildlife habitats, one on EarthDay 2004.

6. RE Programs

- Two programs on wildlife habitats with Master Gardeners
- Youth video: *Cost of Cool*
- Video series 1. *Affluenza*, 2. *Escape from Affluenza*, 3. *Next Industrial Revolution*.
- Voluntary Simplicity
- Sustainable Living
- Hiking Programs
- Wildflower Walks
- Canoeing on Monocacy
- Humanity and Environment Course
- Green Markers in Library on spines of books with green message
- Youth group recycling ink cartridges

7. Communication

- Green Sanctuary Committee table
- Green Sanctuary Committee web page on UUCF website
- Green information resource binder
- Green Sanctuary email list
- Committee member plans to write a “Green Corner” for *Unison*
- Green Sanctuary Committee members have written in *Unison* in the past

8. Worship Integrating Wisdom of Earth

- Earth Day services several years running
- Katherine Jesch (2004), Jim Scott (in prior years)

- Music selections sometimes incorporate seventh principle
- Children's stories sometimes incorporate seventh principle
- CUUPS group active in church, leading solstice celebrations and other earth-based ceremonies
- Site selection for Church: built with designs to maximize connection to earth via windows, views.
- Ground breaking for new building included earth centered ceremonies
- Sermons often connect spiritual with nature/earth
- Various congregational rituals include: water communion, flower communion, earth communion, blessing of the beasts, youth Maypole

9. Social Action

- Heifer Project
- Some legislative awareness through e-mail list
- Information on Mad as a Hatter Mercury program (NIH) provided at Green Sanctuary Table
- UUSC Coffee Project promotes awareness of global effects of daily choices and helps support small farmers earn a fair living through sustainable practices
- Some volunteer opportunities have been announced via e-mail list (e.g., annual Potomac Watershed Cleanup)