

Churches participating in PSEC's 50-50-50

Calvary UCC, Barto: I have downloaded the Creation Justice Brochure to share with our Congregation. We will have the link available to our faith family for the Pollinator via our weekly email and newsletter. Looking forward to working with our congregation to become more "green". This will be a work in progress for all of us.

Calvary UCC, Reading: Calvary agreed to put its social concerns committee to work helping found the Reading-Berks Chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby. The Consistory endorsed the Carbon Fee and Dividend bill, now H.R. 763, and Calvary members have lobbied our congresspersons in person and on line, attended CCL regional meetings, published letters to the editor, and "tabled" at numerous events in the community, asking people to let Congress know they are concerned about climate change and want Congress to act.

Carversville UCC, Carversville: Our congregation has made the commitment to replace traditional fluorescent tubes with LED tubes, not only to bring down our energy bills but also because they are more environmentally friendly. LED bulbs consume less power per unit (lumen) of light emitted. This reduces greenhouse emissions from power plants. To date we have installed 32 LED tubes, which is about 1/3 of the job done. We will do the rest as cash flow enables us to do so.

Chestnut Hill United Church, Philadelphia: Our church's Environmental Justice Center is researching the installation of solar panels for our building, and supporting the The 30 Million Solar Homes stimulus package proposal.

Epler's Church UCC, Leesport: Since December of 2019, we have been the location of two used clothing and shoe collection bins. Since Dec. 11, people in our community have made donations of 6,550 lbs. of clothing/shoes which has been kept out of the landfill and are able to be reused/repurposed.

Falkner Swamp UCC, Gilbertsville: Falkner Swamp UCC has decided to plant pollinator plants around the grounds of the church as a kickoff to any other endeavors that we will pursue. We would also like to have a youth-hosted meatless meal, and form a small working group within our church to get the ball rolling on other measures to combat climate change. We will start moving in this direction once our county moves to green due to the COVID19 crisis. We are hopeful that we can plant the pollinator plants within the next month.

First UCC, Royersford: Our property committee has had the boilers of both the church and parsonage serviced. We also have a garden club which continues to beautify the church grounds. Recently we created a raised garden for our youth to plant complete with a bird house. Members of our congregation have been purchasing meals from locally-owned businesses to feed essential workers and church folks who live alone during this pandemic. Our pastor will preach on climate change in the near future. We vow to cease using foam cups, to hold a meat-free potluck meal, and to join the denomination-wide goal of planting 50,000 trees in various ways. We look forward to continuing and/or

accomplishing these earth friendly expressions of respect for God's creation when we are back together again worshipping as a congregation.

First UCC, Schuylkill Haven: In 2019, we converted to LED lighting inside the building and for the parking lot lights. For our fellowship time after worship, several years ago we converted from insulated disposable cups for hot beverages to ceramic mugs, but early this year we also dropped paper cups for cold beverages and introduced glasses. For communion Sundays, we reclaimed the tradition of the church from years ago as we pulled glassware out of storage and reduced our use of disposable plastic. We strive to unplug electrical appliances when they are not in use. This fall, as COVID19 permits, we will introduce a small group to explore the congregation's interest in addressing our continuing stewardship for God's gift of creation.

Friedens UCC, Oley: Our Mission Team wanted to do something more “green” to help the environment. We instituted a recycling program at our church a few years ago, but in light of the “50-50-50 Challenge,” we decided to explore the idea of planting trees. We really did not have a good spot to plant another tree on our property, so the next best thing was to donate funds for trees to be planted in National Parks around our country. A donation of \$100 was made on our church’s behalf to the Arbor Day Foundation. This donation will allow for 100 trees to be planted, thus aiding efforts to reach the goal of planting 50,000 trees set by the United Church of Christ. We hope this mission project for the environment will become a yearly event.

Good Shepherd UCC, Tuckerton, Reading: Our Faith Community has committed to refrain from using styrofoam products going forward. We also pledge to use LED light bulbs as we are able. And, our Youth Group has planted pollinating flowers to attract bees, butterflies, and birds. We are aware how God created all of life and made us stewards. We are committed to doing what we can so all of God's creation can flourish.

Immanuel UCC, Shillington: We have committed to several environmental initiatives at our church including more energy-efficient lighting, using more recycled materials, and planting native and pollinator species on our grounds. However, we believe one of the most important commitments we have is educating our congregation and the community at large. To that end environmental-related messages have come from our pulpit through our pastor and surrogates. Also, we sponsored a Lenten Series entitled Environmental Justice, Science and Faith where we delved into topics such as environmental justice, food and the environment, recycling, and others. Although this was cut short by the corona-virus pandemic we hope to continue the program at a future date.

One UCC, Kenhorst: We are replanting trees on our property that were destroyed in storms last year because we believe in the value of trees for our environment. We also started a container garden to grow produce for our little food pantry. Finally, I'm preaching on climate change this summer as part of our science and religion worship series.

Peace in Zion UCC, Zieglerville: We learned that "Matthew 25: Ministries accepts donations of empty plastic pill bottles for inclusion in shipments of medical supplies and for shredding and recycling. Our pill bottle program fulfills the dual needs of improving medical care in developing countries and caring for our environment." (m25m.org) Peace In Zion is collecting pill bottles, and to date have collected 80 bottles. We are so pleased that our empty bottles will help someone, and will not land in a land fill.

Peace in Zion UCC, Zieglerville: Peace in Zion UCC joined Christ Church UCC, Reformed Church of the Ascension UCC and Olivet Schwenkfelder UCC in a program called, "Trees, Rooted Together" inspired by the UCC goal to plant trees to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. The Zoom program was a mixture of narrative, Scripture, songs, poems, meditation, prayer and personal reflections and led by pastors and lay people from each of the churches, under the direction of Melanie Eberhard, music director for Christ Church UCC. An invitation and link was shared to the UCC website inviting people to plant trees. The program uplifted through trees how we are connected and the faithfulness of God, especially during this time of the pandemic. The program aired on May 7, 2020 and was truly a sacred experience.

Reformed Church of the Ascension, Norristown: Ascension has been steadily changing out their bulbs to LED, hoping to complete the task in 2021. In 2020, we replaced our aging boiler with a higher efficiency model, including updating several thermostats. We installed motion sensors in the bathrooms to ensure lights extinguish. Our newsletter and Sunday bulletins are offered online. And Dwayne and Liz will be testifying in support of RGGI in December. Liz attended and volunteered to be a Climate Ambassador for the UCC to educate congregations about climate change and our roles in helping reverse it.

Ridge Valley United Church of Christ, Sellersville: Changed Sanctuary lighting, vestibule, bathroom, and most parking/outdoor lighting to LED. Planted a new tree on Church grounds Spring 2020. Eliminated Foam cups and utensils at greet and coffee time, began using washable cups and plates. Reduced heating of unused space for winter and furnace was serviced. We plant a flower garden and hold services in the outdoors during Summer. Returned Christmas greens to compost, and will reuse materials for wreath making events.

Rosedale United Church of Christ, Laureldale: Our church is planning to join the denomination-wide goal of planting 50,000 trees. We will plant trees at our church, around our homes, or have a tree planted for \$1 in a National Park. We plan to cease using Styrofoam cups at church gatherings. Our building committee will continue to have our boiler serviced annually. And we plan to plant a butterfly garden in our church yard in the spring.

St. John's UCC, Lansdale: We currently have an active and enthusiastic team of church members focused on caring for God's Creation. The Team is working toward having St. John's identified as a Creation Justice Church and has written and affirmed a statement to that effect. Numerous gardens have been planted on the church grounds to attract butterflies and bees, and these gardens are cared for entirely by volunteers. During the pandemic, several meetings have occurred outdoors in our

labyrinth, which has been intentionally landscaped with plants and flowers that are important to the ecosystem. Our Buildings and Grounds Supervisor has been working to gradually change all lighting in the church building to LED, and each Board of our Church Council has been challenged to find small ways to demonstrate care for God's Creation (printing fewer reports on paper, using more recyclable items in the church kitchen, etc.)

St. Paul's UCC, Fort Washington: We offered an electronics recycling event at our church focused on small household electronic items and will partner with a neighboring school in 2021 for another recycling event focused on large electronic devices.

St. Peter's/Wilshire UCC, Reading: We have eliminated disposable plastic cups and switched to glass cups when offering communion. We will include more plants in our church gardens that attract pollinators with goals of becoming a Monarch Waystation and providing a bee-friendly environment. We offer education to parishioners about the environment via church talks, posters about current issues and are planning to include various environmental articles in the monthly newsletter. We hope to involve the church-sponsored Boy Scout troop in making/installing bird houses on the property.

Salt & Light (Formally Grace Christian Fellowship): For the past two years we have dedicated a space on our church property as a vegetable garden. Named in honor of the recently deceased mother of our Minister of Music, Bunny's Garden grows organic vegetables and herbs. Our church is located in food desert where fresh fruits and vegetables are not readily available. Through our garden and food pantry, we are able to offer over 50 families fresh, organic, locally grown produce.

Tabernacle United Church, Philadelphia: Our pastor regularly preaches on climate change but as part of Climate Action week, she preached a sermon on the importance of trees and our kinship with God's creation. As a congregation we joined the UCC campaign to plant 50,000 trees and together we paid to plant 170 in the U.S, 14 olive trees in Palestine, and 28 trees in East Africa for a total of 212 trees! Praise God for the ability to be active for our climate, to love trees right from our homes and computers.

United Christian Church, Levittown: Our Green Chalice Team has been certified by DOC, yet thought I'd share with you "some of" our efforts. Installed solar panels – roof and to heat hot water heater, had energy audit, upgraded lighting systems for energy efficiency, installed low-flow toilets, installed programmable thermostat, added rain barrels – use rainwater for irrigation, Earth flag in front yard flag display, replaced disposable communion cups with glass communion cups, Tom Wells Sunday speaker – lobbyist for ecological legislation, reduce or eliminate use of disposable dinnerware – moved to using regular dishes and silverware, reducing single use plastics/items, trying reusable paper towels, reducing announcement insert in bulletin to reduce paper use, regularly provide eco-tips in newsletter and Minute for Mother Earth – Sunday morning eco announcement during worship announcements

Zion United Church of Christ, Womelsdorf: We are receiving offerings for the \$1.00 per tree to be planted in the United States. We were going to start this collection on the very first Sunday when we could not worship together. When we return we will do a "penny jar" collection for 4 Sundays. We will

do a dedication using some of the prepared resource materials. Some people have already mailed money to the church for this cause. The penny jar collection is a tradition with this congregation. There is a song that is sung while the jar is passed by several children. Even though it is called a penny jar it readily accepts dollars. I have taped pictures of trees to the clear jars. We will send this "tree" money to the UCC after it has been dedicated.

Zwingli United Church of Christ, Souderton: Zwingli has relamped the entire Sanctuary with LED bulbs.