

Green Sanctuary Manual

by the UU Ministry for Earth, 2007.

(Fred Lautenschlaeger's abstract).

(Introduction by Fred Lautenschlaeger: The 'Green Sanctuary' programme goes well beyond mere ecological environmental issues. It goes to the core of our Principles. It could even be seen as the Manual for the Implementation of the First's 'Vision and Property' declaration passed in 2008. It includes social actions in the widest sense. It encompasses all aspects of our religious life. Our congregation is already involved in many of the aspects required for 'accreditation'. But there is still a long - and continuing - path to go. The Manual describes some very specific projects and activities congregations can undertake.)

1 GS Description (page 1)

Introduction, philosophy, our seven principles are the basis. Collective effort of the congregation working together

Programme Goals

- awareness of significance and complexity of issues
- encourage personal lifestyle changes
- engage in community actions
- strengthen connections between Spiritual Practices and Earth consciousness
- work to heal environmental injustices

Four Focus Areas 2

- worship and spiritual practice
- religious education
- environmental justice
- sustainable living

Planning Process 4

Create a vision *where you want to be*: Have a long-range plan

Assess your current situation - strength, gaps, problems, opportunities, challenges

Action plan. Decide what actions will get you closer to the vision and create an action plan to get there; films about global warming, dietary habits; introduce personal changes into the congregation

Identify tools, strategies, resources, leadership needed to accomplish the action, skills, partners

Implement action plan: spread out over reasonably sufficient time

Evaluate accomplishments: what has already been achieved by the congregation?

2 Starting the Journey 9

Understanding changes: Lifestyle changes through understanding of the implications, because of personal motivation (such as a joined effort to eat less meat), motivation and support, recognizing that the changes are big challenges

Identifying Leadership: establish a team, special commitment to the 'big picture'

Introducing GS to the Congregation 13

3 Assessment 16

Personal assessment: behaviour or practice and congregational programmes

Members are surveyed for their personal practices with respect to environmental issues. This creates awareness, motivation, sharing experience. This could be based on 'footprint' calculations (food choice, emissions, transportation etc.)

Congregational Assessment 17

Church programmes, management practices - more than just property and grounds. Recommended that the Green Sanctuary committee takes the initiative on that (walk about, interview, request relevant reports and documents)

Areas for Consideration for Environmental Assessment

- worship and other spiritual practices: consideration of worship programmes
- Religious Education and Life Span Ed: age-appropriate lessons, activities and discussion, intergenerational learning experiences
- Justice for All Beings on Earth: interface and interracial interactions, 'habitat' gardening
- Congregational Interests and Commitments: social justice, early childhood education, etc.

- Energy Use and Management: energy audit, improvements, assessment of priorities, review energy consumption patterns over the last years, consider first 'individual' wastefulness
- Water Resources: water-saving devices, availability, infrastructure and political issues
- Facilities Condition, Management and Operations: Source of energy sustainable, renewable? Recycling aspects, non-toxic supplies, investment decisions, landscape management, transportation to church, car pools, sustainable food, fair trade, vegetarian options

Assessment Format: The detailed finding will provide a base line for future work, form to fill out for application for Green Sanctuary candidacy

4 Comprehensive Program 25

Make decisions on what matters - small or big, different cups or new heating system, basic personal life style changes, direct changes rather than philosophizing. "All aspects of the current crisis reflect the same mistake, setting ourselves apart and

separating ourselves from othersfor our own gain...". Move to a simpler life style, join Simplicity Circles' for families. Decisions in personal life will influence the congregation's decision.

Accreditation requires at least twelve activities or projects spread over the four Focus Areas shown below

Developing Activities and Projects for the Action Plan

Energy Audit

Congregational Strategic Plan

Add environmental aspects to ongoing programmes that could be expanded

Environmental issues in your communities

Foster special personal interests of people to get involved

Interest in global environmental issues

Possible Focus Area Projects

Worship and spiritual practice

- possible projects: put earth awareness into worship life, special worship themes, seasonal celebrations

Religious Education: direct exposure to nature (walk in the woods, the garden), correct environmental damage (brook clean-up, planting a garden), intergenerational activities (Unicamp?)

- possible projects: Earth-centered curriculum, children adopt a spot in the garden (seasonal cycles, animals, microbes); design a programme to learn about our local landscape, how global warming could affect it; cooperate with other congregations

Earth Justice

- possible projects : community gardens, air pollution, health care, sustainable agriculture, local supplies; segregation issues, regenerate waste areas to become bee and butterfly friendly areas; prevent habitat degeneration.

The congregation must carry plan and carry out at least 2 relevant projects, a least one of them must be done in collaboration with other groups or partners.

- possible projects: adopt a community that suffers from climate change, join coalitions against coal power plants, support affordable housing by direct actions;

Sustainable Living

-- possible projects: energy conservation, implement at least one aspect of the energy audit, require tenants to live up to congregations green policies (recycling etc.), select an area of church policy which requires improvement, such as recycling, socially responsible investments, alternative transportation, office supplies; serious study of an issue with serious environmental impact (water, urban sprawl, food production) - and support through personal life style changes congregational policies and practice) and civic activism

Planning for Success

Making Every Project Count 34

Comprehensive-Issue -Theme: Two themes are shown for two different types of congregation (rural, inner-city) 35

5. Green Sanctuary Accreditation 41