

Earth Care Congregations

an Environmental Ministries program of the Presbyterian Hunger Program

First Year Application Materials

Form 1 Earth Care Congregation Information and Environmental Audit

Form 2 Earth Care Pledge

Form 3 Next Steps/Visioning

Forms may be typed into, saved onto your computer, and then attached to an email to environment@pcusa.org or Rebecca.barnes@pcusa.org. Or, you may mail to the listed contact information.

FORM 2 MUST BE SIGNED BY THE CLERK OF SESSION AND THEN SCANNED/EMAILED OR MAILED.

FORM 1 ECC INFORMATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT

Date: _____

Name of congregation: _____

Number of members: _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Contact person: _____ Phone: _____

Contact Email: _____

Pastor's name: _____ Church Office Phone: _____

Church/Earth Care team web site: _____

Number of Earth Care Team members: _____

Date Earth Care Team was formed: _____

Name of team if not called "Earth Care Team" _____

Presbytery _____

Presbytery staff name (to announce certification) _____

Presbytery staff person's Email: _____

Introduction

Earth Care Teams can decide the best way to move forward with this application. Steps include completing the following audit of their church's practices and asking session to affirm the Earth Care Pledge. There are four categories to be assessed in the audit: worship, education, facilities and outreach. For initial certification, identify the points associated with the correct answer for your congregation and write the points for each answer in the column on the right marked "Your Points." Twenty-five points are needed in each category the first time you apply for certification as an Earth Care Congregation. A total of fifty points, with at least five in each category, are needed for recertification for each year after initial certification.

For initial certification, facilities upgrades can be made at any previous time, but worship, education and outreach activities must have occurred in the past year. For recertification, all upgrades and activities in all categories must have occurred in the past year.

Notes and directions:

- Tips and resources for completing activities in each of the areas are provided in "Earth Care Congregations: A Guide to Greening Presbyterian Churches," found at <http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/environment/pdf/earth-care-guidebook.pdf>:
- In recording points in the worship, education, facilities, and outreach sections of the Environmental Audit, the numbers above the dotted line represent the number of times an action has been completed. The numbers directly across from the mentioned activity are the points associated with the number of times an action has been completed. To mark each item, locate the activity, look at the "number of times completed" row at the top and then drop down in the appropriate column to locate the point value. For instance, if your church devoted one Sunday to earth care in the past year, you receive 5 points whereas if your church had 5 such Sundays, you receive 25 points.
- In some sections, the application invites you to share a resource your church has located and appreciated (glass communion cup, cleaning supplies, Vacation Bible School curriculum). This optional sharing of resources can help other congregations wanting to make changes.
- In other areas of the audit, you are invited to share measurables where appropriate and known (i.e. number of acres and pounds of food related to your community garden). All of the estimations/approximations should be figured for the full year (lbs paper saved per year, lbs food produced per year, etc). This optional information helps us to communicate what Presbyterians can do, together, across the U.S., when our efforts are combined. If you use the EPA EnergyStar portfolio manager, it tracks these measurables for you. For more information about the portfolio manager visit www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=evaluate_performance.bus_portfoliomanager and let us know you are participating!
- The activities listed on this audit are by no means the only way for your congregation to act as stewards of God's earth! The audit was created to standardize a scoring system for the program. Please use the "other" section, listed after outreach, to write in other activities that your congregation has completed. You are encouraged to send in further information and pictures from events with your ECC application.
- If you have any questions about the audit, please do not hesitate to contact Environmental Ministries at environment@pcusa.org or (800) 728-7228, x5624

Send completed application (Forms 1, 2, and 3) by email (preferred) or mail to:

Rebecca Barnes
Environmental Ministries
PCUSA
100 Witherspoon St
Louisville, KY 40202

Email: Rebecca.Barnes@pcusa.org and environment@pcusa.org.

EARTH CARE CONGREGATION AUDIT

WORSHIP (25 TOTAL POINTS NEEDED FOR INITIAL CERTIFICATION)

Number of actions	1	2	3	4	5	Points
Number of Sundays devoted to earth care in the past year	5	10	15	20	25	_____
Number of worship services conducted outdoors in the past year	5	10	15	20	25	_____
Number of sermons on earth care in the past year**	5	10	15	20	25	_____
Number of earth care awareness dramas or dances in worship in the past year	5	10	15	20	25	_____
Number of trees/shrubs planted for new members, baptisms, confirmations, etc.	2	4	6	8	10	_____

Number of actions	1	5	10	25	50	
Number of Sundays that worship services had an intentional earth care component (prayers, hymns, readings) in the past year **	2	4	6	8	10	_____
Number of Sundays that an earth care themed banner or other art was displayed in the past year	2	4	6	8	10	_____
Number of Sundays that locally grown, pesticide free flowers were used in the sanctuary	2	4	6	8	10	_____
Number of Sundays that a Minute for Mission on earth care issues was presented	2	4	6	8	10	_____
Number of Sundays with a paperless service	2	4	6	8	10	_____

Actions	Yes	No	
Did your church purchase Eco-Palms for Palm Sunday? http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/enough/eco-palms/	5	0	_____
Did your church promote and participate in an earth care-focused Lent discipline? **	10	0	_____
Does your church use glass communion cups or regularly do communion by intinction? **	10	0	_____
Does your church have an outdoor meditation labyrinth or prayer garden?	10	0	_____
Did your church sponsor an event for members to write a song, sermon, or prayer with an earth care theme?	10	0	_____

Subtotal for Worship _____

** If you recommend particular worship resources or sources for glass cups, devotional materials, etc. please share here:

EDUCATION (25 TOTAL POINTS NEEDED FOR INITIAL CERTIFICATION)

Number of actions	1	2	3	4	5	Points
Number of children's/youth Sunday school courses (series of classes) on earth care	12	14	16	18	20	_____
Number of adult courses (series of classes) with an earth care focus	12	14	16	18	20	_____
Number of days Vacation Bible School had an earth care theme	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of guest earth care speakers or programs	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of classes held outside	1	2	3	4	5	_____
Number of youth projects related to earth care conducted	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of articles/announcements about earth care in the bulletin/newsletter	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of months a bulletin board on earth care was displayed	2	4	6	8	10	_____
Number of pages on the church's website devoted to earth care	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of books, games, videos, or other materials with an earth care focus in the church library	1	2	3	4	5	_____
Number of educational events focused on sustainable lifestyle choices for members	12	14	16	18	20	_____
Number of times email messages about earth care sent to church members	1	2	3	4	5	_____
Number of earth care fairs or educational events held	12	14	16	18	20	_____
Number of art displays or exhibits focused on earth care held at church	4	8	12	16	20	_____
	Yes	No				
Is an earth care component included in confirmation classes?	5	0				_____
Is an earth care component included in new member classes?	5	0				_____
Subtotal for Education						_____

** If you can recommend particular curricula, books, speakers, please share here:

FACILITIES (25 TOTAL POINTS NEEDED FOR INITIAL CERTIFICATION)

Energy conservation	Yes	No				Points
Has your church earned recognition for greening efforts from other groups? (circle one, if: ENERGY STAR for Congregations, GreenFaith, or Interfaith Power & Light)	10	0				_____
Does your church have any LEED-certified buildings?	10	0				_____
Has your session approved a plan to become carbon neutral? (suggested in the General Assembly 2006 Carbon Neutral Challenge)	5	0				_____
Does your church purchase renewable energy, i.e., wind, solar?	5	0				_____
Has your church performed an energy audit and implemented at least two of the suggested items?	5	0				_____
Did your church perform 2 preseason (prior to heat/prior to air conditioning) checkups to maintain its HVAC system in the past year?	2	0				_____
Heating/Cooling		0 somehalfmostall				
Are your church's furnaces high-efficiency models?	0	2	3	4	5	_____
Are your church's air conditioners high-efficiency models?	0	2	3	4	5	_____
Are your church's HVAC systems programmable to turn on and off at set times?	0	2	3	4	5	_____
Are your church's HVAC systems zoned so that not all rooms need to be heated/cooled at the same time?	0	2	3	4	5	_____
Number of outside doors that seal tightly	0	2	3	4	5	_____
Number of windows that seal tightly	0	2	3	4	5	_____
Number of windows that are double-pane	0	3	5	7	10	_____
Number of windows that are covered with plastic or storm windows for energy efficiency	0	2	3	4	5	_____
Lighting		0 somehalfmostall				
Number of fixtures with efficient light bulbs: compact fluorescent light bulbs, LEDs, or efficient T8 tube lights	0	2	5	7	10	_____
Number of exit signs with light emitting diode (LED) bulbs	0	2	5	7	10	_____
Number of restrooms with motion sensors on lights	0	2	3	4	5	_____
Number of classrooms with motion sensors on lights	0	2	3	4	5	_____
Number of rooms with signs to turn off lights when you leave the room (if no motion sensors)	0	1	2	3	4	_____
Heating water		0 somehalfmostall				Points
Number of church's water heaters tankless or on-demand?	0	2	3	4	5	_____

If known, amount of money and energy saved from above "energy efficiency" efforts:

Renewable energy and alternative building	Yes	No	Points
Does your church use geothermal energy to heat and cool its facilities?	10	0	_____
Does your church have solar panels?	10	0	_____
Does your church have a wind turbine to generate power?	10	0	_____
Does your church have cob, straw bale, or rammed-earth tire construction?	10	0	_____

If known, amount of money and energy saved per year from renewables/alternatives:

Water conservation	0	some	half	most	all	Points
Number of dual-flush or low-flow toilets installed	0	2	5	7	10	_____
Number of waterless urinals installed	0	2	5	7	10	_____
Number of faucets with aerators	0	2	3	4	5	_____
(If known, amount of water saved from efforts: _____)						

Recycling/Waste	0	some	half	most	all	Points
Amount of discarded paper that is recycled (if known, list approx. lbs here: _____)	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Amount of recycled paper purchased (if known, list approx. # sheets/year here: _____)	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Number of copies made that were double-sided	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Approximate amount of aluminum, glass, and plastic recycled (if known, list approx. lbs here: _____alum, _____glass, _____plastic or _____overall)	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Amount of food scraps and lawn/garden waste that is composted (approx. lbs: _____)	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Amount of purchased paper products (napkins, paper towels, toilet tissue) made with recycled paper	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Amount of electronic equipment recycled (if known, approx. lbs _____)	0	1	3	4	5	_____

	Yes	No	Points
Does your church serve as a recycling drop-off for church members and/or the community?	5	0	_____
Are church members given the option of receiving the church newsletter via email?	3	0	_____

Reusing	0	some	half	most	all	Points
Number of plates used that are reusable	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Number of cups used that are reusable	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Amount of flatware used that is reusable	0	1	3	4	5	_____

Number of events where water is served from pitchers (not disposable water bottles) (estimated number of disposable plastic bottles saved per year: _____)	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Number of tablecloths used that are reusable	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Food consumption	0 somehalfmostall					
Amount of coffee served that is fair trade (if known, approx. lbs used per year: _____)	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Number of meals with vegetarian choices	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Amount of organically or locally grown food used (approx. lbs used per year:_____)	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Cleaning Products	0 somehalfmostall					
Number of cleaners used that are less-toxic, i.e., vinegar, baking soda, salt, borax	0	1	3	4	5	_____
Grounds	0 somehalfmostall					Points
Amount of fossil fuel-based fertilizers used on grounds in past year	5	4	3	1	0	_____
Amount of chemical pesticides, including herbicides, used indoors and out in the past year	5	4	3	1	0	_____
Amount of plants on the church grounds that are native	0	1	3	4	5	_____
	Yes	No				
Has your church established a wildlife habitat on the church grounds? (approx. square footage of wildlife habitat:_____)	5	0	_____			
Does your church have a bike rack on its property?	2	0	_____			
Storm Water Management	Yes	No				
Does your facility have a rain barrel or cistern to catch water from gutters for later watering needs?	5	0	_____			
Does your church have a rain garden, bioswale, or other feature to help manage storm water runoff? (approx. square footage of storm water management landscaping:_____)	5	0	_____			
	0 somehalfmostall					
Amount of the parking lot that has permeable pavement (approx.. square footage of permeable pavement: _____)	0	2	5	7	10	_____

** If you recommend particular environmentally-friendly products, companies, sources, please share here:

Subtotal for Facilities _____

OUTREACH BEYOND YOUR OWN CHURCH (25 TOTAL POINTS NEEDED FOR INITIAL CERTIFICATION)

Number of actions	1	2	3	4	5	Points
<i>Getting out into God's Creation</i>						
Number of camping trips, nature walks or outings in which your church has participated	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Youth group sponsoring a pick-up trash or stream clean-up	4	8	12	16	20	_____
<i>Witnessing to Corporate Lifestyle Changes</i>						
Number of days alternative transportation (walk/bike/bus/carpool) to church was promoted	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of times <i>used</i> materials were donated for re-use in social justice projects such as Habitat for Humanity, clothes closets, etc.	2	4	6	8	10	_____
Number of times a service project related to earth care conducted	4	8	12	16	20	_____
<i>Engaging in Public Policy Awareness and Advocacy</i>						
Number of times your session voted to take a stand on local, regional, or national earth care legislation	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of times members were encouraged to write or email elected officials about earth care legislation (local and/or national)	2	4	6	8	10	_____
Number of public hearings or visits to elected officials' offices to advocate for earth care regulations or legislation in which a group from your church participated	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of times petitions were available for members to sign for earth care campaigns or strategies	2	4	6	8	10	_____
Number of times the earth care issues from the PC(USA) Office of Public Witness, Hunger Program, Environmental Ministries, NCC Eco-Justice or related email actions were used in an educational setting in the congregation	2	4	6	8	10	_____
<i>Standing with others</i>						
Number of times co-sponsored an environmentally-related event with other local churches, environmental organizations, or other partners	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of times someone from your congregation provided assistance or leadership to another congregation wanting to engage in earth care	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of times members of your church stood in solidarity with members of a community negatively impacted by environmental racism/classism/injustice	4	8	12	16	20	_____
<i>Spreading the word</i>						
Number of times your church received local press, presbytery news, or other wider sharing of your earth care efforts?	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of times visitors/new members/returning members mention importance of earth care efforts as a Christian witness of this congregation?	2	4	6	8	10	_____

Number of times church members join local environmental organizations in their activities?	4	8	12	16	20	_____
Number of events/activities that involve young adults (18-30 year olds) in earth care programs of the church?	4	8	12	16	20	_____
		Yes	No			
Is your church a group member of Presbyterians for Earth Care (presbyearthcare.org)?	5	0				_____
Does your church sponsor a scholarship or send a member to attend the Presbyterians for Earth Care biennial conference?	5	0				_____
Does your church host direct farm marketing (including farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture, buying clubs, or after services farm stand)?	5	0				_____
Does your church sponsor, offer, or attend a mission trip focused on an earth care issue? (Hosting mission trip organization, if you can recommend for others: _____)	10	0				_____
Does your church have an international partnership with a church, presbytery, or community organization working for environmental justice in their own area of the world? (Country/name of partnership: _____)	10	0				_____
Did your church sponsor an e-trash recycling or household hazardous waste day for the community?	5	0				_____
Does your church sponsor a community garden?	10	0				_____
Does your church share or rent office space with non-profit groups?	5	0				_____
Has your church purchased Sweat-Free T-shirts (made with organic cotton)?	5	0				_____
Does your church collaborate with other Presbyterian, ecumenical, interfaith, or secular groups focused on earth care?	5	0				_____
Does your church participate in gleanings projects (saving/reusing food from local farmers' markets or farms)? (approx. lbs gleaned: _____)	10	0				_____

** If you recommend particular environmentally-themed mission trip sites, public policy tools, and other resources for outreach , please share here:

Subtotal for Outreach _____

TOTALS

Subtotal for Worship _____
Subtotal for Education _____
Subtotal for Facilities _____
Subtotal for Outreach _____
Total _____
10

Congratulations on finishing your Earth Care Congregations Information and Environmental Audit, and on all the good work that your congregation has done to protect God's creation. Thank you for your ministry!

Other earth care activities your church has completed or other information to share:

Name and contact information of anyone in your congregation who has technical environmental expertise and would be willing to consult/share knowledge on a limited basis with another PCUSA congregation trying to care for God's earth:

If your audit shows that your congregation has earned at least 25 points in each category, please continue to Form 2, Earth Care Pledge, and Form 3, Next Steps/Visioning.

If the audit shows that your congregation has some steps left to earn 25 points in each category, please continue to take actions toward earth care and apply to be an Earth Care Congregation once the point total has been reached. ECC Guide (<http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/environment/pdf/earth-care-guidebook.pdf>) lists examples and resources for the four categories of earth care activities that the church can choose to implement. Environmental Ministries can help you with ideas on how to implement activities and facilitate changes to work toward the Earth Care Congregation certification. Please contact Environmental Ministries with any questions at (800) 728-7228, x5624.

EARTH CARE PLEDGE

The Social Justice and Peacemaking Unit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in consultation with congregations and presbyteries across the denomination, developed a five-part resolution as a model for mobilizing congregations to respond to the General Assembly’s “CALL TO RESTORE THE CREATION.” The resolution was simplified to a four-part pledge in 2010. Churches applying to be an Earth Care Congregation must have the Earth Care Pledge affirmed by their session and signed by the clerk.

Earth Care Pledge

Peace and justice is God’s plan for all creation. The earth and all creation are God’s. God calls us to be careful, humble stewards of this earth, and to protect and restore it for its own sake, and for the future use and enjoyment of the human family. As God offers all people the special gift of peace through Jesus Christ, and through Christ reconciles all to God, we are called to deal justly with one another and the earth.

1. Our **worship** and discipleship will celebrate God’s grace and glory in creation and declare that God calls us to cherish, protect and restore this earth.
2. In **education**, we will seek learning and teaching opportunities to know and understand the threats to God’s creation and the damage already inflicted. We will encourage and support each other in finding ways of keeping and healing the creation in response to God’s call to earth-keeping, justice and community.
3. Our **facilities** will be managed, maintained and upgraded in a manner that respects and cherishes all creation, human and non-human, while meeting equitably the needs of all people. In our buildings and on our grounds we will use energy efficiently, conserve resources, and share what we have in abundance so that God’s holy creation will be sustainable for all life and future generations.
4. Our **outreach** will encourage public policy and community involvement that protects and restores the vulnerable and degraded earth as well as oppressed and neglected people. We will be mindful that our personal and collective actions can positively or negatively affect our neighborhood, region, nation and world. We will seek to achieve environmental justice through coalitions and ecumenical partnerships.

Affirmed by

Name of Congregation _____ City, _____ State _____

Signature _____, Clerk of Session Date _____

Please send the signed Earth Care Pledge to Environmental Ministries as part of the completed ECC Application (Forms 1, 2, and 3).

NEXT STEPS/VISIONING

We invite you to include photos, bulletins, or newsletter articles in order to share ideas and best practices among congregations. We would be happy to highlight your congregation's good work if we receive a good paragraph about your congregation's particular program(s) that you think would be of interest to others. In addition to pictures and good description you might think about including a quotation from the pastor, a church member, or a youth/young adult. Please include paragraph below under "other" or attached in an email.

Briefly describe your plans for recertification in each of the four areas for next year (50 points are needed to be recertified, at least 5 in each category):

Worship:

Education:

Facilities:

Outreach:

Other:

Send completed application (Forms 1, 2, and 3) by email (preferred) or mail to:

Rebecca Barnes

Environmental Ministries, PCUSA

100 Witherspoon St

Louisville, KY 40202

Email: Rebecca.Barnes@pcusa.org and environment@pcusa.org.