

**EARTH CARE INITIATIVE
MAPC 2020 Annual Report**

Kathy Downey, Linda Ford, Jackie Gruer, John Hancock, Yana Keck, Judy Lindblad, Julie Malkin-Shade, Nina Naberhaus, Bill Stiver, John Tallmadge and Pat Timm

The Earth Care Leadership Team began work in 2016 when commissioned by the Session. Our goal has been to reach into every nook and cranny of the congregation and our facilities “to become a carbon neutral and waste free church, to do what we can to help the planet rather than to harm it, and to transform consciousness through the life practices of both the congregation as a whole and our individual households.” We identified the Presbyterian Church USA Earth Care Certification Program as a guide for our work. In January 2017 the Session adopted by a unanimous vote and acclamation our Earth Care Policy (see addendum).

2020 EARTH CARE ACTIVITIES

Green Faith: Worship

April 26: Earth Day worship online. Ryan Mooney-Bullock preaching (Executive Director of Green Umbrella).

Green Learning:

“We Care/Earth Care”: Seeing a need to strengthen connections among MAPC members and friends during the pandemic, and to support each other in our care for the earth, we inaugurated a monthly e-magazine in August 2020. Editors Julie Malkin and John Tallmadge, strive to include a wide and diverse group of voices from the community. Julie and John receive valuable assistance from Nori Muro, who insures smooth publication via Constant Contact.

Issues published to date:

August 2020. Inaugural issue: Nature Up Close
September 2020. Trees
October 2020. Election
November 2020. Food
December 2020. Energy
January 2021. Reduce/Reuse/Recycle

February 2021. Ancient Ohio Earthworks

Themes for future 2021 issues include gardening, birds, hiking, water and more.

Green Living and Lifestyle Practices:

Recycling Sundays and special events (coordinated by Bill Stiver):

January 19 - All items, including styrofoam blocks, noodles and egg cartons

October 3- Keep Cincinnati Beautiful Recycling event (Roberts Academy)

MAPC Recycling Center: Boxes and barrels in the Social Hall for continuous collection of dry cell batteries, eyeglasses, medicine bottles, plastic plant containers, plastic lids, Styrofoam egg cartons, compact fluorescent lights, and electronic devices.

“Becoming Carbon Neutral” class with John Hancock, October 15, 2019 to April 21, 2020. Producing a net zero plan for each participating household, an advocacy plan for public policy, and a “how to” booklet to persuade others that it can be done. This class was cut short by one session due to the pandemic; John is working to complete the booklet.

Green Building and Grounds:

New energy efficient HVAC system and windows for the office building completed. New energy efficient HVAC system for the education building completed. 11/19/20 marked the one-year anniversary of our 63 KW solar installation, which reduced our annual power demand from the grid by 63%. For details, see Eric Burgmann’s report in the addendum

Green Outreach:

All-Church Retreat: In response to last year’s successful retreat at Huston Woods we scheduled another for the weekend of May 29, 2020. We expanded the Planning Committee to include representatives from physically challenged members (Lisa Foster) and children and family programming (Ellen Muse). After considering several state parks and retreat venues in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky, the planning team settled on General Butler State Park in Carrollton, KY. We reserved rooms and cabins, planned program and meals, and developed communication strategies. Our last planning meeting was held March 9, 2020, at which time we still believed we would go forward. But then the pandemic broke out, and by mid April we understood the need to cancel. Although the pandemic continues to impose restrictions

on group gatherings, we look forward to a possible Earth Care All-Church Retreat in 2022.

Other outreach and collaborative activities:

August: Green burial celebration for Norm Lindblad

October: Faith Communities Go Green (Pat, Judy); Transfiguration Spirituality luncheon (Judy); Ohio River Cleanup in the East End (10/5)

Pat Timm photo exhibit

Contacts to share our programs and activities: UKirk Cincinnati, Presbytery of Cincinnati, and Knox PC (John, Pat)

Management and Administration:

January 25 - Responding to Session's **proposed committee reorganization**, we adopted the following declaration:

“Session’s proposal is consistent with our work plan—to have Earth Care activities initiated by Session Committees, especially Congregational Engagement, Worship, Operations, Outreach, and Education and Spiritual Nurture. We will engage the committees more intentionally and communicate with them more actively. We welcome their original initiatives and want to support them in the implementation of their Earth Care strategies.

☑ For the foreseeable future, we will continue to exist as the Earth Care Leadership Team (ECLT). We want to be an incubator for ideas and programs that enhance our “green life.” We want to preserve the universality of Earth Care in our congregation’s life and ministry. We seek to articulate, inspire, motivate, and make sure good ideas are implemented. Our members will serve as resource people to the Committees when invited. We will continue to explore new ideas, provide leadership to an All-Church Earth Care Retreat, develop the “Becoming Carbon Neutral” program and publication, schedule “green” field trips, and administer Recycling activities.

☑ The ECLT is not a formal committee. We have no regular meeting date. We eat together, pray together, play together and plan together. We are a resource to each other in our Earth Care leadership and our individual efforts to grow spiritually and to sustain Mother Earth.”

February 15 – application for **recertification** as an Earth Care congregation submitted to PCUSA. Reauthorized.

November – work on design and content for **Earth Care pages on MAPC web site** (Nina, Pat, John)

ADDENDA



1. EARTH CARE POLICY

To be prophetic, to become the change we know is necessary, to do the right thing now, we will take steps toward becoming a carbon-neutral and waste-free church. We will seek new approaches to our church facilities that will help the planet rather than harm it. We will take specific steps to transform consciousness through the life practices of both the congregation as a whole and our individual households through informed commitments and faithful actions.

Green Faith: 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.

Green Learning: 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.

Green Living And Life Style Practices: We will endeavor to manage our personal and congregational economies in a manner that respects and cherishes all life, human and nonhuman, in order to meet our own needs without compromising those of others, *or of the future*. We will personally pursue environmentally-friendly paths in our use of energy, transportation, recyclable materials, and other resources while keying them to our own spiritual practice. As a congregation, we will commit to overhaul our buildings and grounds to use energy and resources efficiently and sustainably.

Green Outreach: 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.

(ADOPTED by a Unanimous Vote and Acclamation of Session, January 25, 2017)

2. MT. AUBURN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Celebrates a year of Solar power

In November of 2019 Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church (MAPC) commissioned a 63 kilowatt photovoltaic solar power system on the roof of the sanctuary and education building. The total investment in the system was \$150,000 and was installed by Solar Energy Solutions after a competitive bid process. This is the foundational project the congregations undertook to become carbon neutral and also supports the Presbyterian Earth Care initiative.

The project was financed through a loan from the Presbyterian Investment Loan Program that offers very low interest rates for projects investing in sustainability. The savings in utility charges are enough to pay the loan over a 20 year period while the congregation is protected from future electric rate increases. The system has yielded a SURPLUS of power in several months over the past summer and is producing at least a third our needs in the winter.

In the year since implementation MAPC has generated 61.1 Megawatt Hours of solar energy saving 105,000 pounds of CO2 the equivalent to planting 798 trees. This has cut our electrical demand from the grid by 63% from 118,000 kilowatt hours to about 43,000 KWH. It is important to note the importance of Net Metering policy of Ohio to the viability of this project. Without net metering this project would not have been viable especially since as a nonprofit we do not benefit tax incentives.

Eric Burgmann

