



*Green Sanctuary*  
*Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations*  
*Congregational Stewardship Services*  
*25 Beacon Street*  
*Boston, MA 02108*  
*617.948.4251*

## **Application for Green Sanctuary Accreditation**

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### **Congregation Information**

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick  
4880 Elmer Derr Rd, Frederick, MD  
<http://www.frederickuu.org>

Green Sanctuary contact: Sandra Smith-Gill and Marney Bruce  
Address: c/o UUCF, 4880 Elmer Derr Rd, Frederick, MD  
Phone: 301-473-7680  
Email: [greensanctuary@frederickuu.org](mailto:greensanctuary@frederickuu.org)

Minister: Reverend Robert Hughes

### **Congregation Profile**

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick (UUCF) is a religious organization in southern Frederick County, Maryland, serving Unitarian Universalists in Maryland and nearby Virginia and West Virginia. Our congregation is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association. This year we celebrate our 50th anniversary and are planning a celebration event in the fall of 2011. We currently have 194 members in 136 households and 169 friends on record. We meet for services on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m., when there is also programming for children and young people. We have about 72 children and youth in our Religious Education program. We continue a single service at 10:00 a.m. in the summer months of July and August, and a special summer Religious Education program. There are additional activities during the week including a variety of workshops, seminars, and discussion groups as part of our Adult Spiritual Enrichment program. Our Circle of Life Cooperative Preschool just received a first place award for being one of the greenest classrooms in America.

Ours is an informal and welcoming congregation. We are open to many spiritual paths towards meaning. We are a non-creedal, non-doctrinal congregation. We often say “come as you are”. Dress is casual and informal. Children are welcome at the services, however most participate in the religious education program, and our ‘rocking room’ off the sanctuary is available for parents with restless children where they can watch and hear the service.

We moved into our current building on Elmer Derr Road in the spring of 2002. UUCF's building is located on a little over 6 acres in the country, about 10 miles from the city of Frederick. Our

land is recovering farmland, bordered on one side by a busy highway, and on the other sides by rural homes and farm fields. Our site is zoned "Agriculture", which in Frederick county limits activities by a "house of worship" to only those that have a religious program purpose. We do not have city water or sewers. Our location, zoning restrictions, and the need to maintain our own well and septic system presents a set of challenges that many congregations do not face. In addition, we have the challenge of using best land management practices to control the runoff from our property, and of managing a range of wildlife which might not be found in a more urban location.

Reverend Robert Hughes has been our part-time Consulting Minister at UUCF since February 2010. In the spring of 2005, when faced with a major change in the ministerial presence at UUCF, we embarked on a new program to provide selected members of our congregation with opportunities to enter the pulpit and to work with the minister in planning and leading worship. The positive reception from the congregation for the Worship Associates Program has been gratifying. We will be searching for a new minister in the coming year, and are currently engaged in a process of visioning and self-examination about our future.

The UUCF Chalice Community (also known as Small Group Ministry) is a program made up of small groups, normally six to ten members or friends of the congregation. Each group meets regularly (usually twice a month) to share experiences, interests, and ideas and to explore spiritual themes through the guided discussion. Topics are selected by the group. These are fellowship and discussion groups; they are not therapy. The name "The Chalice Communities" picks up on the theme of the UU chalice symbol for truth seeking and community fellowship. Members of each group care for and support each other in their spiritual lives and each group is strongly encouraged to conduct outreach projects both inside and outside of UUCF. UUCF's program has been developed by members of the congregation with the support of the minister based on other successful programs. The facilitators meet together several times a year. Administration of the program is done by the Chalice Community Steering Committee.

Our Green Sanctuary Program first came into being when we replaced exotic invasive plants with natives on the blueprints for our new building in 2002. It took over four years of hard work by many dedicated individuals to develop and begin implementation of a Green Sanctuary Action Plan! The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick was accepted by UUMFE as a Green Sanctuary Candidate in 2007. In 2010, the Social Action and Green Sanctuary Committees merged into the Social & Environmental Justice Committee (SEJC); the Green Sanctuary Program continues as a task force project within the SEJC.

### **Congregational Vote**

Please attach documentation of your congregation's vote to seek Green Sanctuary certification (e.g., Annual Meeting minutes). Include the specific statement the congregation voted on.

## Completion of Action Plan

### Worship and Celebration Projects

#### 1. Special Earth Day Services & Commemorations

##### Project Description and Action:

We have held special Earth Day services most years since 2002 to promote the Seventh Principle and the message that every day is Earth Day. Our services often were given by guest speakers such as Katherine Jesch and Jim Scott. In 2010 our service was given by our youth group. This year the Earth Day service was planned jointly by Reverend Hughes and Green Sanctuary member Marney Bruce who tied together the themes of Easter and Earth Day.

For several years we have promoted the entire month of April as Earth Month, emphasizing social and environmental justice issues (See Attachment 1<sup>1</sup>, page 24). We usually designate UUMFE as our April (Earth Month) split-plate recipient. We try to arrange speakers or programs about environmental justice and sustainability; this year we hosted a presentation by Michael Judd, founder and director of Project Bona Fide in Nicaragua. In 2010 and 2011 we also celebrated Justice Sunday in April, with Reverend William Murry as a guest speaker. Following the service, the Social & Environmental Justice Committee hosted an ice cream social for the congregation (serving local, organic ice cream), and had displays highlighting the ongoing social and environmental justice projects of the committee.

We traditionally have special activities and displays following the Earth Day Service that affirm the Seventh Principle. In 2005 we held a Greening Charrette after the worship service on April 17<sup>th</sup> and Katherine Jesch attended. Many congregants attended and the workshop addressed every aspect of our Green Sanctuary goals. Attendees were given the opportunity to vote on the programs that were most important to them. For example, one year we demonstrated solar ovens; our teen group made solar oven kits for younger children to construct and collected donations for providing solar cookers to refugees in Darfur. This year we featured posters highlighting our Green Sanctuary Program and progress in our certification efforts, as well as a Harvest Table with vegetable seedlings and shrubs grown by congregational members.

Each Earth Day a member who is a biologist provides an educational display of plant species that have potential importance as future crops or medicines. The intent of these is to show the importance of protecting endangered species and how each is a strand in the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Examples include *Euphorbia resinifera*, a cactus-like plant from the mountains of Morocco that contains a substance being developed as a treatment for cancer pain and *Hoodia gordonii*, a threatened succulent plant from South Africa used to suppress appetite and reduce obesity.

In addition to the ecological and economic aspects of each plant, information on related bio-piracy and environmental justice issues is presented where applicable. For example, in the case of *Hoodia*, the ethno-botanical knowledge of the San people, or Bushmen, and their plant

resources were initially exploited by drug companies with no promise of any return to the people of the area. Information on the successful international efforts to obtain a return to the people in the form of patent royalties was presented.

**Timeline for Completion:** Ongoing established tradition at UUCF

**Outcomes:** We have been quite successful in reaching every part of our congregation to encourage participation and elicit comments and recommendations. This has resulted in green practices becoming a way of life at UUCF.

**Leads:** Reverend Robert Hughes, Marney Bruce, and Ed Rau

## 2. Earth Centered Worship

### **Project Description and Action:**

Our outdoor labyrinth is a focus for Earth-centered worship and our outdoor amphitheater provides a natural environment for worship and communing with nature.

Our CUUPs group (Covenant of UU Pagans) provides celebrations to honor the Earth and its cycles. The group has been practicing at UUCF since 2005. They seek a life more in balance with nature by exploring the teachings and traditions of various pagan and Earth-centered religions and philosophies. They regularly lead programs honoring the solstice, equinox, and other changes of the seasons. They have also worked with our Worship Associates to incorporate drumming, rattling, and chanting into our Sunday services.

The entire congregation celebrates May Day with a May pole dance. This year Rev. Hughes preceded the celebration with a "Blessing of the Earth".

**Timeline for Completion:** Ongoing

**Outcomes:** The congregation has embraced stewardship of the earth and closeness to nature, and has a heightened awareness of connection between spiritual practice and Earth consciousness.

**Leads:** Reverend Robert Hughes (minister), Mary Fletcher (Worship Associate), and Cosette Blackmer (CUUPs)

## **Religious Education Projects**

### **1. Circle of Life Cooperative Preschool (CLC)**

#### **Project Description and Action:**

The CLC Preschool, founded in 2004, provides a child-centered and parent-involved preschool program based on the foundation of the Unitarian Universalist Seven Principles and a belief that the family should be involved in their child's development. It is located at the environmentally friendly UUCF. The curriculum, derived from the natural world, introduces pre- and early-reading and math skills and teaches children the value of stewardship of the Earth.

A green learning environment is very important. The program is designed to be environmentally friendly and healthy for the children and the environment.

- Most classroom equipment and toys are made of sustainable materials. Classroom materials are eco-conscious, and include wooden puzzles and blocks, cloth dolls, shells, sandstones and plants.
- Green cleaning products and hand soap which use fair trade and organic ingredients are used in the classroom.
- The wall paint is low VOC.
- Paper is recycled, snack leftovers are composted and trash items are up-cycled with Teracycle.
- Organic snacks are served daily which include organic milk and local produce, some of which is harvested by the students from their own gardens.
- The playground features several garden areas where strawberries, mint, lettuce, carrots and tomatoes are grown in the spring and eaten by students in the fall.
- UUCF members and friends helped build a cob house made with straw, mud, sand, reclaimed bottles and rescued windows. The project took three years to complete.

Learning about nature doesn't stop when the children leave the classroom. Educational field trips such as to a local organic farm are included in the curriculum. CLC fundraisers are environmentally and socially conscious. Events have included fair trade and organic bake sales, plant sales, and numerous recycling drives, including up-cycling with Teracycle.

On May 13, 2011, the CLC Preschool was awarded the first-place prize, with an accompanying \$500 award, as one of America's greenest classrooms in a competition sponsored by Malt-O-Meal cereal and TerraCycle. The 'green award' was [reported in the local Frederick New-Post](#). UUCF is very proud of its preschool!

**Timeline for Completion:** Ongoing established organization at UUCF, since 2004.

**Outcomes:** The Earth-friendly program for 17 three and four year old children has been nationally recognized with the 'green' award. The program enhances the intellectual, emotional, physical, social and creative development of children in the preschool community. The CLC Preschool:

- Provides quality, ongoing, developmental and educational programming for three to four olds in a weekday program
- The children learn about the environment at an age when they are exploring the world
- Provides a network of support for parents of the three and four year olds at CLC and
- Keeps costs down for families by having them fulfill duties normally fulfilled by paid staff.

**Lead:** Susan L. Singley (UUCF member and CLC teacher)

## 2. Adult Spiritual Enrichment Programs

### Project Description and Action:

Religious Education is a central and integral part of UUCF's congregational life. We believe in and promote lifespan religious education for all ages. This is ongoing and can be summarized as four types of activities:

- **Classes:** Adult Spiritual Enrichment classes are part of our ongoing congregational life. We have had regularly scheduled classes which address a variety of ethical and environmental issues. We have hosted Northwest Earth Institute discussion groups on Voluntary Simplicity, Global Warming and Choices for Sustainable Living, and we plan to have a discussion group on Ethical Eating.
- **Workshops:** We sponsored a Green Clean Workshop to educate members in green cleaning techniques and supplies. We have also sponsored workshops on composting and sustainable practices. We have arranged Master Gardening classes on organic and sustainable gardening and on rain gardens. We also sponsor periodic native plant sales.
- **Displays and Exhibits:** The Green Sanctuary Program has regular displays in the atrium of the building and maintains a display cabinet. We have also developed table-top presentations on native plants, composting, landscaping for wildlife, closing the recycling loop, simple living, and more.
- **Community Project Participation:** Currently our congregation is part of the larger Frederick Sustainability movement which includes symposiums and a film series. The SEJC/Green Sanctuary Committee has annually participated in a community event with a table or booth featuring displays highlighting the "Greening of our Faith Community": *Waste Not! Expo* in 2009 and 2010 and *Frederick Earth Day* in 2011.

**Timeline for Completion:** Ongoing established programs at UUCF

**Outcomes:** The classes, displays and exhibits have helped build awareness of the significance and complexity of environmental issues. Our participation in community projects both increased our visibility and directly engaged us in community action on environmental issues.

**Leads:** Nancy Hutchins (ASE), Linda Hallinan (Chair SEJC), Rev. Robert Hughes

### 3. Earth-Centered Children's Religious Education Programs

#### **Project Description and Action:**

The lessons for the month of March 2011 were on earth-centered spirituality: Creation spirituality, Native American spirituality and Goddess religions.

Summer Religious Education programs have been earth-centered. Summer 2009 focused on Native American stories and earth stewardship, using stories and activities from *Keepers of the Earth* by Michael Caduto and Joseph Bruchac, to teach about Native American beliefs and their close relationship to the environment. The curriculum for summer 2010 was based on UUA's Tapestry of Faith: Gather the Spirit, a multigenerational workshop series on water stewardship. A favorite activity of the children was a demonstration and story of how difficult it is to keep "your" water clean if "their" water isn't clean.

This summer, 2011, a one-room classroom for 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades will use *The Kids' Book of Awesome Stuff* to explore their connection to the interdependent web. The class will also develop a meditation walk around the church grounds, using readings from many faith traditions as well as body prayers and meditations at each "corner" or stop on the walk.

**Timeline for Completion:** Ongoing

**Outcomes:** The children have learned about stewardship of the earth, and the interdependent web.

**Lead:** Lora Powell (DRE)

#### **Environmental Justice Projects**

##### **1. Elmer Derr Road Environmental Clean Up**

#### **Project Description:**

We conduct four trash and recyclables pick-ups per year of a three mile stretch of the county road that leads to our building. This road is just below a busy state highway and receives trash discarded from the highway as well as from the local road. Volunteers gather early on a Saturday morning, sign in, and are issued safety vests provided by the county. During the clean-up, the workers are followed by a vehicle bearing a warning sign. This year we are inviting the Kol Ami Jewish Congregation who rents our building for their services to participate in the clean-ups with us.



The project is collaboration with the Alice Ferguson Foundation as part of the Potomac Watershed Cleanup. The trash we remove would otherwise go into a culvert which empties into our waterways. Aquatic animals, plants and birds all suffer from damage to their habitat caused by these human actions.

It is also part of the county [Adopt-A-Road](#) project, so the county mows the roadside vegetation (to facilitate access) prior to scheduled work and picks up trash bags after the work is finished. Volunteers take the bags of recyclables home to be disposed of properly. The project provides a clean roadside for the entire community.

As an environmental justice project, our Elmer Derr Road Clean Up educates our congregation and the community about environmental clean-up, and actively reduces waste as well as protects our local watershed. It engages the congregation in active community action. This is a long-term project which includes on-going partnerships with local and another non-profit organization.

**Timeline for Completion:** Ongoing (long-term), continually since 2004 . The clean ups are established ongoing events scheduled on the UUCF Calendar.

**Outcomes:** We have been recognized by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for this action and we hope our actions serve as a model for care of the environment for our neighbors.

**Lead:** David Hutchins

## 2. UUCF Fair Trade Project

### Project Description:

Since 2004 our **Fair Trade Boutique** has provided a showcase for ethical trading. We sell Fair Trade coffee from Equal Exchange and two other roasters, one of them local ([Dublin Roasters](#), Frederick, MD.). We also sell Fair Trade tea from Equal Exchange and a variety of other importers. As of winter of 2011, all coffee, tea, and cocoa in our kitchen is Fair Trade.

We also offer other Fair Trade, organic, and eco-friendly merchandise sourced from vendors and who meet one or more of several criteria:

- Is a member of the Fair Trade Federation or equivalent international organization;
- Offers Fair Trade Certified products;
- Is a member of Green America Business Network and listed in the National Green Pages.

We use local suppliers whenever we can. We emphasize the concept that is taken directly from *Green America's* publications: "following a fair and a sustainable supply chain". Introduction of each new product line was accompanied by educational displays. For example, hemp apparel, bags, hats, and edible hemp products were displayed with material explaining the environmental and economic benefits of hemp.

We feature fairly traded apparel for the whole family in our boutique and showcase it in an annual Fair Trade Fashion Show open to the public. The purpose of the shows is to demonstrate the availability of attractive sweatshop-free, ethically-traded apparel for real people at reasonable prices. Models of all ages are recruited from the congregation and Frederick community. We partner with two to five local, national, or international vendors and showcase their outfits, as summarized in the following Table:

| Year | Theme                            | Vendor-Partners   |
|------|----------------------------------|---|
| 2008 | Fairly Fashionable Show & Sale   | Marketplace: India, Global Mamas, Ecolution   |
| 2009 | Fashion Made Fair                | One-World-Is-Enough, Artesania Santa Domingo (local importer of Fair Trade alpaca products and jewelry from Peru), The Barefoot Boutique (local shop featuring fairly traded apparel) |
| 2010 | Exceptionally Ethical & Eco-Chic | Deva Lifewear, GreenEdge Kids, FairTribe, Autonomie Project, Marketplace: India   |

In conjunction with the Fair Trade Fashion Show held in December, we have a Conscientious Consumer Holiday Boutique with many fairly traded and eco-friendly items available for sale, including ornaments, Fair Trade coffee, tea and chocolate, consignment apparel from the Fair Trade Fashion Show, and our entire Fair Trade and Eco-Friendly inventory.

Our Fair Trade Project website includes background educational material about [Fair Trade](#), an on-line [Boutique](#) featuring our products, and drop-ship products from Fair Trade vendors (One-World-Is-Enough, Autonomie Project). We also promote the [Fair Trade Project](#) and [Fair Trade Boutique](#) on FaceBook.

As an environmental justice project, our **Fair Trade Project** educates our congregation and the community about fair and ethical supply chains, and actively supports Fair Trade by purchasing and reselling Fair Trade products. This is a long-term project which includes short-term as well as on-going partnerships with local, national and international Fair Trade vendors.

**Timeline for Completion:** The activities of the project are established ongoing events scheduled on the UUCF Calendar.

**Outcomes:** As an outreach program, we have educated the congregation and changed their consumption habits. The [project](#), [Boutique](#), and [Fashion Shows](#) have been the subject of a number of articles in local newspapers. Our Fair Trade Project was also featured in a full page feature write-up of the spring 2010 edition of *Green America*. In addition to being a self-supporting program which provides about \$2,000 in fundraising to UUCF, the Project also supplies all the Fair Trade coffee, tea, and cocoa for our kitchen.

**Leads:** Sandi Smith-Gill (Boutique and web-site), Jane Ladner (Coffee-Etc Sales), and Debbie Couture (Fashion Show)

### 3. Dig This Well! Bringing a Fresh Water Well to Oltorotua, Kenya

#### **Project Description and Action:**

For centuries the pastoral Maasai of East Africa moved when weather conditions mandated a change of grazing sites. Once located, they quickly built small dung and mud houses, which, with a kraal (corral) for livestock, were arranged in a circle to protect themselves and their herds. A number of governmental and environmental pressures have gradually altered their traditional culture to one in which villages remain in one location and herdsmen move the livestock. Maasai houses today resemble the ones built by their ancestors but may have modern refinements, like corrugated metal roofs, but they are still arranged in a circle, or fenced compound, that offers protection. Eleven of these compounds comprise the community of Oltorotua.

Unfortunately, the Maasai's access to water is as limited as it has been since they first settled in East Africa several thousand years ago. In most Maasai villages, a woman's daily chore is leading donkeys to the nearest source of water, whether river or spring, filling large jugs, and returning, usually about a 6.5 kilometer (4 mile) trip each way, depending on the location of the water. In a time of drought, the distance can double. Although the women in Oltorotua accept their job in carrying out this task, raising small children with water restricted to miniscule amounts is difficult and the quality of the water is questionable. Obtaining safe water daily is always problematic.

The well will be centrally located in the village so that an anticipated 800 people and animals in the Oltorotua community have access to it. Latrines, needed to protect the water supply, will also be built. Jackson Liriam, a Maasai junior elder, has taken the local lead for this project and gained support for the well and latrines from the community elders, who will provide unskilled but needed volunteer labor and then maintenance labor and costs upon completion of the well.

As an environmental justice project which includes partnerships with local, national and international organizations, this project directly facilitates the right to water for villages in a water-restricted part of the world. In addition, this project promotes social justice. The constitution/bylaws of the Oltorotua Community Water Project, a committee of village elders, require that the Project Maintenance Committee be, "...gender balanced, preferably more women numbering than men." This is very important because it will ensure that the women, who are more affected by the current lack of adequate clean water and sanitation facilities, will now have the ability to make sure that decisions made about the operation and maintenance of the new facilities are in their best interest.

**Timeline for Completion:** This project will be in partnership with Rotary International, a service organization with an excellent reputation for building wells in developing countries. A representative from Rotary International, District 7620 is writing a proposal for submission and a Kenyan Rotary Club will provide local oversight of the project. Contributions will be filtered through Rotary, deductible under 501(c) (3) and matched by the organization.

## 2011

- January: Hydrogeologic Survey completed and bore holes dug. Solicit proposals from groundwater practitioners. (Completed)
- February: Grant submitted to Rotary International.
- July: Approval of Grant.
- August: Well digging begins.

## 2012

- Summer: Completion of well and latrines; train Maasai to carry out sanitation and maintenance procedures.

**Outcomes:** Fresh water will have a huge impact on life in Oltorotua. The children will be healthier, hygiene and general sanitation will be improved, and the risks of water borne diseases will be reduced. For example, Susan Liaram shares (through Jackson's translation and with his support) that she would like to own a small business. That can be only a dream so long as she, like other village women, must spend much of the day with fetching and boiling water, since the men are occupied with livestock and Jackson works away from the village. Women at Oltorotua who used to walk long distances to get water will have time to do other tasks and have energy to use their time and untapped skills.

Also see: <http://digthiswell.wordpress.com/>

**Lead:** Mary Bowman-Kruhm

## **4. Watershed Stewardship**

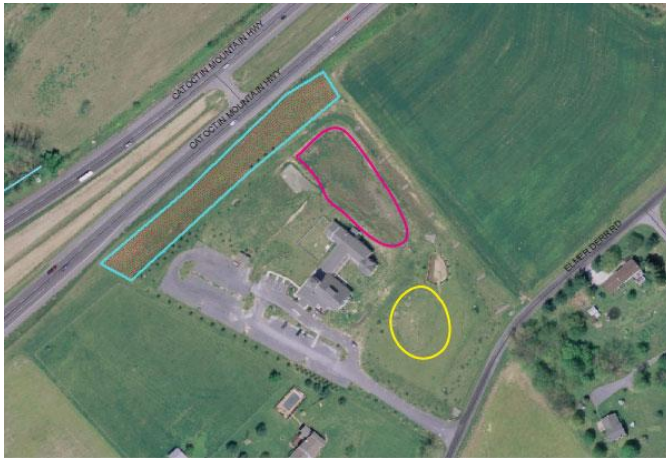
### **Project Description and Action:**

This is a new project, which builds on and completes many actions that have already been taken on our grounds, and in addition engages UUCF in active partnerships with the community, county, and state. (For detailed description of project, see *Attachment 2*<sup>2</sup>, page 25).

UUCF's Watershed Stewardship project will actively engage our diverse congregation in practices that contribute to water conservation and watershed restoration on our property and in our community. Congregation feedback on project actions will be sought regularly through congregation meetings and scheduled workshops and discussion groups. Actions will include individual and congregational water conservation by tracking and tallying the pledge commitments of congregation members to learn the cumulative impacts of our individual actions.

As a partner in the [Monocacy & Catoctin Watershed Alliance](#) (MCWA), UUCF will network with individuals and organizations to improve the health of the Monocacy and Catoctin watersheds through "hands-on" restoration initiatives, including:

- Creating a [seed growout station](#) on UUCF property, which will enlist the youngest members of our congregation as watershed stewards.
- Improving best land management practices on and around our church grounds through meadow plantings, detention area plantings, and ROW (Right-of-Way plantings on the MD State Route 15 along our property, in partnership with Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (SHA).
- Ultimately “adopting” a public park in the watershed for regular site maintenance and continued restoration.
- Hosting a “Community Clean Water Summit” which will feature presentations from watershed experts from both local government and non-governmental organizations.
- Participating in community watershed planting projects.



An aerial view of UUCF. The area being considered for the ROW warm season grass meadow is outlined in **blue**. The Meadow Plantings are outlined in **yellow**, and the Detention Area Plantings are outlined in **pink**.

As an environmental justice project, this project will directly work with land management practices both on our church grounds and in community parks and lands involving “hands-on” restoration initiatives of our Monocacy and Catoctin watersheds, and directly contribute to local, county, and state efforts to improve our watershed health, the health of the Chesapeake Bay, and access to clean, safe water by all.

**Timeline for Completion:** The project will take place in the next 3 years. A detailed timeline is presented Attachment 2<sup>3</sup>, page 29).

**Outcomes:** The Watershed Stewardship project is a natural outgrowth of UUCF’s commitment to conserving natural resources and implementing green practices in our church operations. Through this project we expect to:

- Be recognized by MCWA as a [Watershed Steward](#) (a property owner who works to improve water quality and wildlife habitat on their property);
- Become a watershed conservation leader in the greater UU community by sharing our experiences and stressing the important connections between community and watershed health;
- Broaden our connections within our local community through our MCWA;
- Demonstrate to our congregation and others that small changes can result in big impacts when we work together;

- Track how our actions to restore and maintain our adopted park have resulted in a cleaner, healthier watershed habitat.
- Cultivate watershed stewardship principles and practices in congregation members of all ages.

**Lead:** Pam Gromen

## **Sustainable Living Projects**

### **1. Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping**

#### **Project Description and Action:**

The original site selection and designs for our building were planned to maximize connection to Earth via windows and views. Our Green Sanctuary Program came into being when we replaced exotic invasive plants with natives on the blueprints for our new building in 2002. The congregants in charge of the grounds weren't familiar with native plants or the value in using them so the Green Sanctuary Committee provided information and resources. For example, Bradford pear trees, which are not native and are very invasive, had been selected for the parking area. Instead we planted native trees and shrubs, such as redbuds. Members of the congregation participate in periodic work parties to plant and maintain landscaping.

Landscaping is designed to enhance and protect local wildlife. There are designated tracts of land on UUCF property to develop into a native plant gardens and wildlife habitats. An area above the septic field is being transformed into a wildflower meadow to cut down on mowing. The Board of Trustees has adopted an environmentally friendly pest control policy and has almost completely eliminated the use of pesticides and herbicides. Creating a wildflower meadow has proven to be an ongoing learning process to control weeds without using chemicals until the native prairie plants are established.

Water washes from the highway onto our property during storms, carrying pollutants and topsoil and causing erosion. A significant part of our landscaping program involved finding ways to slow the water so that more of it would stay on our property. The semi-permeable gravel area of the parking lot and a holding pond maintain erosion control and reduce run-off. We planted or seeded our detention pond with native plants to make it a meadow that provides nectar and hosts plants to a wide variety of animals. On the rim of this meadow we built a bluebird trail with twelve bluebird houses build by a UUCF member. Our teenagers have learned to clean the bluebird houses and monitor their activity, which includes identification and removal of nests and eggs of invasive pest species. Our birdhouses are well-used by bluebirds and other species.

**Timeline for Completion:** Completed, with ongoing improvements (long-term).

**Outcomes:** Our efforts have been educational not only to those working on the grounds but the congregation at large, including the youth group. Our landscape is now made up of mostly native plants and is a wildlife habitat. Our efforts have reduced erosion and helped many generations of

birds and insects raise their young. We have few invasive plants on the property and are controlling those that have been identified. We expect to be certified as a Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. We have impacted not only our congregation but also the Frederick community with our efforts to identify ways to live more sustainably.

**Leads:** Stan Schlepp (Chair, Facilities Management Committee), Dick Menzer, and Marney Bruce.

## 2. Facilities Management & Energy Conservation

### Project Description and Action:

UUCF underwent its energy audit and received an energy cost reduction plan in Dec 13, 2004. We have since made follow-up changes to the building and grounds to increase our energy efficiency, summarized in the table below.

| Action   | Purpose  | Description  | Result                                       | Timing                             |
|--|--|--|--|------------------------------------|
| <b>1/2 switch plate covers</b>   | Electric savings   | Made 1/2 room lights less accessible   | Lower electric usage                         | Ongoing                            |
| <b>220v timer on water heater in basement</b>                              | Save electricity   | Installed 24 hr timer on basement water heater                                 | Heats 1 hr/day, saves energy                 | Ongoing                            |
| <b>Compost bins</b>  | Compost  | Two 5'x8' bins in back yard; each bin rotated periodically w/4' tractor bucket | Reduced kitchen waste in trash               | Ongoing                            |
| <b>Replace bulbs with efficient ones</b>                                   | Save electricity   | Replaced 300 lamps in 60 fixtures w/energy efficient bulbs                     | Energy and \$ Saved                          | Ongoing                            |
| <b>Insulated outside wall of child's bathroom and ceiling in classroom</b> | Energy savings, warmth in classroom and prevention of pipes freezing | Fill holes in insulation   | Energy and \$\$\$ saved and pipes not frozen | Ongoing                            |
| <b>Water Barrels</b>   | Save water/water plants; catch runoff                                | 7 water barrels under downspouts   | Water savings                                | Ongoing                            |
| <b>Fill in wash-out, level, seed</b>                                       | Stop erosion   | Filled in gully w/stones/soil  | Easy to mow                                  | Permanent                          |
| <b>Electric Power Group Contract</b>                                       | Cheaper power  | Bulk buying  | \$\$\$ Savings                               | 3 yr cycles (just started new one) |
| <b>Reprogram Thermostats</b>   | Save energy  | Timing to lower usage  | Energy & \$\$\$ Savings                      | Ongoing                            |



|   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Sun Block Mini Blinds &amp; Roman Shades</b>   | Allow heat in winter and block sun in summer  | Six 72" Levelor blinds installed in room 125 and roman shades throughout the building | Made rooms more usable and save energy and \$\$\$   | Permanent  |
| <b>Energy Cost Reduction Plan &amp; Audit Follow-up</b>                                     | Our focus is to identify HVAC controller improvements and to make equipment operation more efficient. | This is where the majority of our gas and electric energy is consumed.                | Energy and \$\$\$ Savings                           | Ongoing  |
| <b>Formation of New Facilities Coordinating Committee for future comprehensive planning</b> | FMC will work with groups, committees & the BOT to deal with future planning.                         | Started the audit follow-up process Feb 13, 2011.                                     | Better planning, coordination, and use of resources | Ongoing. Dependent upon funding and human resources. |

Our current focus is to identify HVAC controller improvements and to make equipment operation more efficient. This is where the majority of our gas and electric energy is consumed. Goal is to save energy and money . We renewed the audit follow-up process Feb 13, 2011.

**Timeline for Completion:** See Table above. Our continued audit follow-up process will be an ongoing process and is dependant upon funding and human resources.

**Outcomes:** The specific outcomes of each action are detailed in the Table above. Overall, the improvements have resulted in energy savings, better conservation and lower carbon footprint of our building and grounds, and have saved money for UUCF.

**Lead:** Stan Schlepp (Chair, Facilities Management Committee)

### 3. Trash Talk: Composting & Recycling

#### Project Description and Action:

Currently no curbside recycling exists for businesses in Frederick County. Although the state and county "encourage businesses to recycle, drop-off centers state that they are for "household use only." For many years individuals took recyclables from our office and kitchen to their homes or to collection points on their own initiative. We have taken the following steps to reduce and recycle trash:

- **Waste Reduction**

We use ceramic cups and reusable ceramic plates instead of disposable Styrofoam for our fellowship service. We have a high-efficiency low-water usage dishwasher in our commercially approved kitchen. When larger gatherings require the use of disposables we purchase recycled and/or biodegradable dinnerware and utensils. In the Circle of Life



Cooperative Preschool, reusable plates, cups and utensils are used. We purchase recycled paper products for the office and bathrooms. Earth-friendly trash bags (from recycled material), reusable shopping bags, and other Earth-friendly products are sold on-site to encourage waste reduction by the congregation.

- **Recycling**

UUCF has recently contracted to include recyclable items, including cans, glass, plastic, paper, and cardboard, in addition to trash pick-up. We call the company when the recycle bins are full, rather than having weekly pick-ups, reducing the number of pick-ups and thus reducing the carbon footprint of our recycling program. This new service arrangement has saved money, in addition to facilitating recycling. We have been recycling aluminum beverage cans separately as a fundraising effort. We collect used candles from our services to melt down the wax to reuse. The Circle of Life Cooperative Preschool collects electronics for recycling and works with Teracycle for up-cycling.

- **Composting**

A compost area has been constructed for composting coffee grounds and other compostable waste from the kitchen. When possible, we compost bio-degradable dinnerware. Circle of Life Cooperative Preschool students compost any snack leftovers each day in their own composting bins.

**Timeline for Completion:** Completed. As new technologies and tools become available, we will incorporate them.

**Outcomes:** We have been quite successful in reaching every part of our congregation. This has resulted in green practices becoming a way of life at UUCF.

**Lead:** Stan Schlepp (Chair, Facilities Management Committee).

## 4. Harvest Table

### **Project Description and Action:**

Several years ago a member initiated a “temporary” event called the *Harvest Table* where excess produce from a home garden was donated and made available for “sale” before and after the Sunday services to other members for a free will donation. The program proved to be very popular and became an ongoing activity. The *Harvest Table* tradition has been expanded to include member-grown flowers for gifts at special events such as Mother’s Day, vegetable seedlings for spring planting, and a seed exchange. All money collected from the *Harvest Table* is donated to UUCF totaling \$1,000 to \$2,000 each season. Any unsold produce is donated to a local rescue mission that provides meals to homeless and needy families.

**Timeline for Completion:** An ongoing and established tradition at UUCF.

**Outcomes:** In addition to being a steady fundraiser the event brings the benefits of fresh, locally grown, pesticide-free produce and has increased interest in the congregation in organic gardening. It also provides outreach assistance to the community.

**Leads:** Edward Rau and Marvelle Rau

## **5. Establishing a Green Sanctuary Kitchen Policy**

### **Project Description and Action:**

Many green practices are currently routinely followed in the UUCF kitchen, but they have not been adopted as official policies. According to the UUCF bylaws, policies must be approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees (BOT). The Green Sanctuary task force is developing a set of guidelines which we will present to the Programs Council for review and eventual posting in the kitchen as a recommended procedure. We plan to develop these into a set of policies which the BOT can review and revise, for incorporation into UUCF's policy manual.

**Timeline for Completion:** We will have a draft of Recommended Procedures for Programs Council review at their first meeting in the fall. Following Program Council review, these will be submitted to the BOT as recommended policy for their review and action at a fall 2011 meeting.

**Outcomes:** Green practices in the kitchen will be uniformly observed as UUCF policy.

**Lead:** Marney Bruce

### **Projects Relating to more than one Element**

#### **1. Learning from our Native American Heritage**

**Program Elements:** *Worship & Celebration* and *Religious Education*

### **Project Description and Action:**

We arranged a visit to Fox Haven, a local sustainability demonstration farm, to hear from an authority on prehistory in our area and learned about a rock shelter nearby which was used for thousands of years. We also heard about his work at the site of an Indian village along the Monocacy River in Frederick.

Our Worship Associates have incorporated Native American readings, songs, drumming, and stories into our services, both at Thanksgiving and in conjunction with the CUUPs group, which regularly leads programs honoring the solstice and the equinox.

The children's Religious Education program for the summer of 2009 was Native American Stories and Earth Stewardship. We used stories and activities from the book, *Keepers of the Earth* by Michael Caduto and Joseph Bruchac, to teach about Native American beliefs and their close relationship to the environment.

**Timeline for Completion:** Ongoing

**Outcomes:** Learning about the inhabitants of our area before we arrived puts our lives in perspective and affects our understanding of our natural area. We learn much from the Earth-centered spiritual practices and have a new respect for a way of life which was more in-tune with the environment.

**Leads:** Marney Bruce and Lora Powell (DRE)

## **2. *Moringa* Tree Project – Democratic Republic of the Congo**

**Program Elements:** *Sustainability* and *Environmental Justice*

**Project Description and Action:**

In 2010 the biodiversity display at UUCF was on *Moringa oleifera*, a tree that has many uses and can be easily grown in areas with poor soils. Moringa is a fast-growing, drought-resistant tree that grows even in marginal soils and with very little care. It grows in tropical regions of the world where malnutrition is the worst. In one year, a seedling can grow over nine feet. More information is available at [www.treesforlife.org](http://www.treesforlife.org) in the *Moringa oleifera* Wikipedia article. The Moringa tree is widely known as the “miracle tree” because the leaves are loaded with protein, all essential amino acids, vitamins, and minerals. The nutrition content of the leaves reads like the label on a common vitamin pill. All parts of the tree - seeds, bark, gum, roots - are edible and have many medicinal uses including treatment of high blood pressure and diabetes. The seeds can also be used to purify water and they contain high quality oil for use in cooking, making cosmetics and as a lubricant and biofuel.

The display led to the initiation of a sustainable agriculture project where UUCF partnered with [Able & Willing](#), a local grassroots non-profit, to grow the trees in two villages in the Congo. In these villages, a typical family's one daily meal consists only of buckaroo, a kind of corn meal mush, and hunger and poor nutrition is common. Members of UUCF presented Able & Willing with 1500 Moringa tree seeds. Able & Willing founder Mbuyu “Puma” WaMbuyu is overseeing the distribution and cultivation of the seeds in the Tshamalale and Poleni villages where schools built by funds raised by Able & Willing are located.

The Moringa Tree Project supports sustainability and is also an environmental justice outreach project. UUCF also supports Able & Willing as one of its monthly split-plate recipients and in other recurring programs such as the displays on Justice Sunday.

**Timeline for Completion:** Ongoing

**Outcomes:** The Moringa Tree Project supports sustainability and is also an environmental justice outreach project. The project was highlighted in a lengthy article in the Frederick News Post, a local newspaper. This brought the interest of another Frederick congregation to develop similar projects in Nicaragua, and we will likely partner with them in this effort.. See Able & Willing's [news release](#) for more details.

**Leads:** Edward Rau and Mbuyu “Puma” WaMbuyu (founder of Able & Willing)

### **3. Ethical Eating**

**Program Elements:** *Environmental Justice* and *Sustainability*

**Project Description and Action:**

The entire month of May 2010 was Ethical Eating month. In the children's religious education lessons for the month developed from the UUA's CSAI. Introductory lesson included distributing copies of *Food Rules* by Michael Pollan to families. Other topics were Climate Change and Environmental Degradation; Human Rights, Social Inequality and Environmental Justice; Animal Rights and Human Responsibility; Moving Toward Ethical Eating Practices. One class put together a display of community-supported agriculture programs in the county and surrounding areas; another created a cost-comparison chart of ingredients for the same meal from a big chain grocery store, a farmer's market, and the local organic food co-op. Reverend Hughes gave a sermon which included some consideration of the Congregational Action/Study Issue from GA.

**Timeline for Completion:** Complete

**Outcomes:** The entire congregation gained an appreciation and understanding of how our food choices impact social justice and environmental quality.

**Leads:** Lora Powell (DRE) and Reverend Robert Hughes.

## **Accomplishment of Program Goals**

- ***Build awareness of the significance and complexity of environmental issues***

Our worship services and our youth and adult religious education programs emphasize the seventh principle. We use exhibits, PowerPoint presentations, our weekly newsletter and speakers to build awareness of environmental issues.

- ***Encourage personal lifestyle changes***

We have been quite successful in reaching every part of our congregation, resulting in green practices becoming a way of life at UUCF. Our fair trade sales and the fashion show have educated both the congregation and the community about how our personal consumption choices influence social and environmental justice, and the program has changed the habits of many in the congregation. The three "R"s (reduce, reuse, recycle) are a way of life in the congregation, and for many members in their personal lives. There is an increased interest in home growing of food and sharing of harvests, plants, seeds, and knowledge

- ***Engage in community action on environmental issues***

We have participated locally through our congregation's Elmer Derr Road Clean Up (recognized by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation) and Frederick's Clean Sweep and internationally through our direct participation in projects in Kenya that build latrines and in the Congo that build latrines and schools using local materials and labor.

- ***Strengthen the connection between spiritual practice and Earth consciousness***

We have participated locally through our congregation's Elmer Derr Road Clean Up (recognized by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation) and Frederick's Clean Sweep and internationally through our direct participation in projects in Kenya that build latrines and in the Congo that build latrines and schools using local materials and labor.

- ***Work to heal environmental injustices.***

Our congregation consciously chooses ways and means where our relatively modest contributions of time and money have a real effect. We emphasize that in this way we all can and must take care of our environment and that the sum of these actions is significant.

## Program Evaluation

- ***What do you believe has been the most important benefit your congregation has gained as a result of your participation in the Green Sanctuary Program?***

A true appreciation of the Seventh Principle and the complexities of the web of life. We have learned how much we as individuals and as a group can contribute to sustaining that web of life, and how small changes can result in big impacts when we work together.

- ***What has been the most difficult or challenging aspect of the program for your congregation to achieve?***

Recruiting volunteers for activities. As is the case in many congregations, a small core of active members, all of whom are over-committed, does most of the work.

Ironically, our success in creating a wildlife habitat has presented us with an emerging complex problem of wildlife management that may be our greatest challenge yet. For many years, groundhogs have created problems by burrowing into the earth walls of the retention pond and threatening their integrity. Recently, one of our neighbors discovered a fox den (a female with 5 kits) on our property in one of the old groundhog holes. He wants to start raising guinea hens and chickens, and wants the foxes eradicated because he is afraid they will kill his hens. UUCF could consider moving the foxes to protect them from the neighbor. On the other hand, the foxes are killing the groundhogs that ruin the retention pond walls and are eating the mice before they take up residence in our country building.

The situation will undoubtedly become more complicated. Finding a solution to problems like this one will present a challenge to our congregation. Attempting to balance the needs of wildlife with both the spiritual and practical needs of people will likely be part of our future report when we apply for recertification.

- ***Have you been able to discern positive changes in your congregation's culture as a result of the activities you accomplished? If so, what are they?***

We have been quite successful in reaching every part of our congregation, resulting in green practices becoming a way of life at UUCF. The congregation has embraced stewardship of the earth and a closeness to nature, both spiritually and practically. We see people wearing fair trade clothing and carrying fair trade bags, whereas years ago many had never heard of fair trade (including one of the leads in the project!). There is more interest in sustainability issues and organic and eco-friendly products, especially with respect to raising families.

- ***What are your intentions/aspirations for continuing to live out your Green Sanctuary commitments?***

The congregation is committed to continual learning, finding ways to put the commitments into better practice, and this is the most important aspect of the whole program.

- ***What on-going role do you expect your congregation will take in the wider community relative to environmental issues? How do you feel recognition as a Green Sanctuary affects your position in the community?***

Our new Watershed Project will connect us as a congregation and as individuals to local government agencies and environmental non-profits. We welcome these new relationships and anticipate that they will lead to additional joint ventures.

Recognition as a Green Sanctuary should enhance our visibility in the community, and we are hoping it may attract new like-minded individuals to the congregation. UUCF will be inviting the local community to its 50th anniversary celebration in fall 2011. Green Sanctuary recognition would be a milestone to proudly celebrate at the same time!

DRAFT

<sup>1</sup> Attachment 1. 2011 Earth Day Flyer.

APRIL IS  
**EARTH**  **MONTH**  
AT UUCF  
*Activities Celebrating Social & Earth Justice for the Entire Family*

**Sun April 3**  
10 am

**Friendly Forum** - guest speaker Michael Judd will lead a discussion about **"Project Bona Fide"** - a non-profit organization working toward sustaining culture through organic agriculture, community correlated outreach, and re-forestation projects in Nicaragua.

**Sun April 10**  
9 am & 11 am  
12:30 pm

**Justice Sunday**  
Sermon by **Rev. William R. Murry**.  
**Ice Cream Social** - enjoy ice cream, served by the Tuesday Evening Chalice Community, while browsing at a **Showcase of UUCF Social & Environmental Justice Projects**.

**Sat April 16**  
1-5 pm

**Frederick Earth Day** - a community-wide family-friendly Earth Day celebration at Frederick's Baker Park. The **UUCF Green Team & Circle of Life Cooperative** will present displays highlighting the greening of our congregation.

**Sun April 17**  
9 am & 11 am  
12:30 pm

**Split Plate** shared with **UU Ministry for the Earth**. Please Give Generously!  
**SEJC/GREEN SANCTUARY DISCUSSION GROUP** - a work session devoted to our Green Sanctuary Certification document.

**Sun April 24**  
9 am & 11 am  
12:15 pm

**UUCF Earth Day & Easter Sunday**  
Sermon by **Rev. Bob Hughes**  
**Harvest Table** - vegetable seedlings from Ed Rau's Greenhouse.  
**Displays & Activities** to be announced . . .

**Sat April 30**  
9 am

**Elmer Derr Rd "Adopt-A-Road" Clean-up** - a work party to clean up UUCF's 2-mile adopted stretch of Elmer Derr Rd.





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**<sup>2</sup> Attachment 2. Full text of Watershed Stewardship Project. UUCF  
Environmental Justice Project  
Watershed Stewardship**

*“Every human should have the idea of taking care of nature, of water. Therefore, using too much or wasting water should have some kind of feeling or sense of concern. Some sort of responsibility and with that, a sense of discipline.”*

-the fourteenth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso

**Introduction:**

All living creatures depend on water, and watershed health is critical to accessible, clean water supplies. *We all live in a watershed -- the area that drains to a common waterway, such as a stream, lake, estuary, wetland, aquifer, or even the ocean -- and our individual actions can directly affect it.*<sup>2</sup>

UUCF's building and grounds are located in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which encompasses 64,000 square miles and includes six states: Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New York plus the District of Columbia. The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in the United States.

Major sources of watershed pollution are agricultural, urban, and suburban runoff. Every time it rains, sediments, nutrients, and chemical wash down from yards and fields into the streams of the watershed, and eventually find their way into the Chesapeake. UUCF's building is located on six acres in the country, about ten miles from the city of Frederick. The water that runs off UUCF's property ultimately feeds into Renn Branch and then Ballenger Creek in the Lower Monocacy watershed. The Monocacy, in turn, is the largest tributary to the Potomac River, which empties into the Chesapeake Bay. Nearly 90% of the Lower Monocacy watershed is within Frederick County.

The health of the Chesapeake watershed is poor despite 25 years of restoration efforts. Major sources of watershed pollution are agricultural, urban, and suburban runoff. However, [Executive Order 13508 issued by President Obama](#) on May 12, 2009, has rekindled interest and support for Chesapeake watershed restoration. The order resulted in an action plan for cleaning up the bay watershed, and the plan depends on cooperative involvement of local, state, and federal government agencies as well as support from the watershed residents and non-government organizations.

In 2005, after deciding to seek Green Sanctuary certification, UUCF hosted a “Greening Charrette” to solicit feedback from the congregation on what goals to pursue in the application for accreditation. Watershed restoration was chosen as an Environmental Justice initiative.

Our land is recovering farmland, bordered on one side by a busy highway, and on the other sides by rural homes and farm fields. We try to use best land management practices to control the runoff from our property, and help restore our parcel of the watershed. We do not have city

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water or sewers, and the need to maintain our own well and septic system presents a set of challenges that many congregations do not face. Proper care of our entire septic system is necessary to protect our investment in our building, and to ensure that the system does not malfunction and contaminate the ground water. According to the EPA, there are four vital things to do to protect a Septic System:<sup>2</sup>

- Inspect and pump the tank regularly
- Use water efficiently
- Avoid disposal of household hazardous wastes in sinks or toilets
- Care for the drainfield

Our Facilities Management Committee works hard to take good care of our septic system, and congregational practices outlined in the main body of the application are designed to maximize efficient water use and minimize use of harsh or toxic wastes and chemicals.

UUCF's Watershed Stewardship project will actively engage our diverse congregation in practices that contribute to water conservation and watershed restoration both on our property and in our community. Congregation feedback on project actions will be sought regularly through congregation meetings, scheduled workshops, and discussion groups.

### **Project Description and Actions:**

#### **Water Conservation by Congregation Members**

Individual households can make a big impact on water conservation through small changes. We plan to kick off our Watershed Stewardship project with a "water-by-the-numbers" survey and pledge to be completed by members of the congregation either online or in paper format. The survey portion will poll congregation members on their current water practices whereas the pledge will provide a list of simple actions that can be taken to improve water conservation in the home. Each action will be associated with an estimate of the gallons of water that would be saved per year. By tracking and tallying the pledge commitments of congregation members, we can learn the cumulative impacts of our individual actions.

#### **Watershed Restoration on UUCF Property**

**Project Partner:** [Monocacy & Catoctin Watershed Alliance](#) (MCWA)

##### MCWA Vision Statement

*We envision a broadening and deepening stewardship ethic among an informed citizenry, which will help protect the County's agricultural heritage and rural character, maintain and improve the quality of life, protect and treasure our natural resources, and manage future growth more wisely. We envision healthy streams and rivers with forested buffers supplying clean drinking water and supporting healthy communities of aquatic and terrestrial life, as well as diverse and popular recreational uses. We envision a healthy and vibrant agricultural community built on links with citizens who support local agricultural and renewable forest products. We envision increasingly concentrated residential development using conservation design principles*

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*with access to collective transportation modes and a web of well-maintained trails. We envision watershed conservation folks from all sectors and communities collaborating to implement effective conservation and restoration practices and foster a creative stewardship consciousness.*

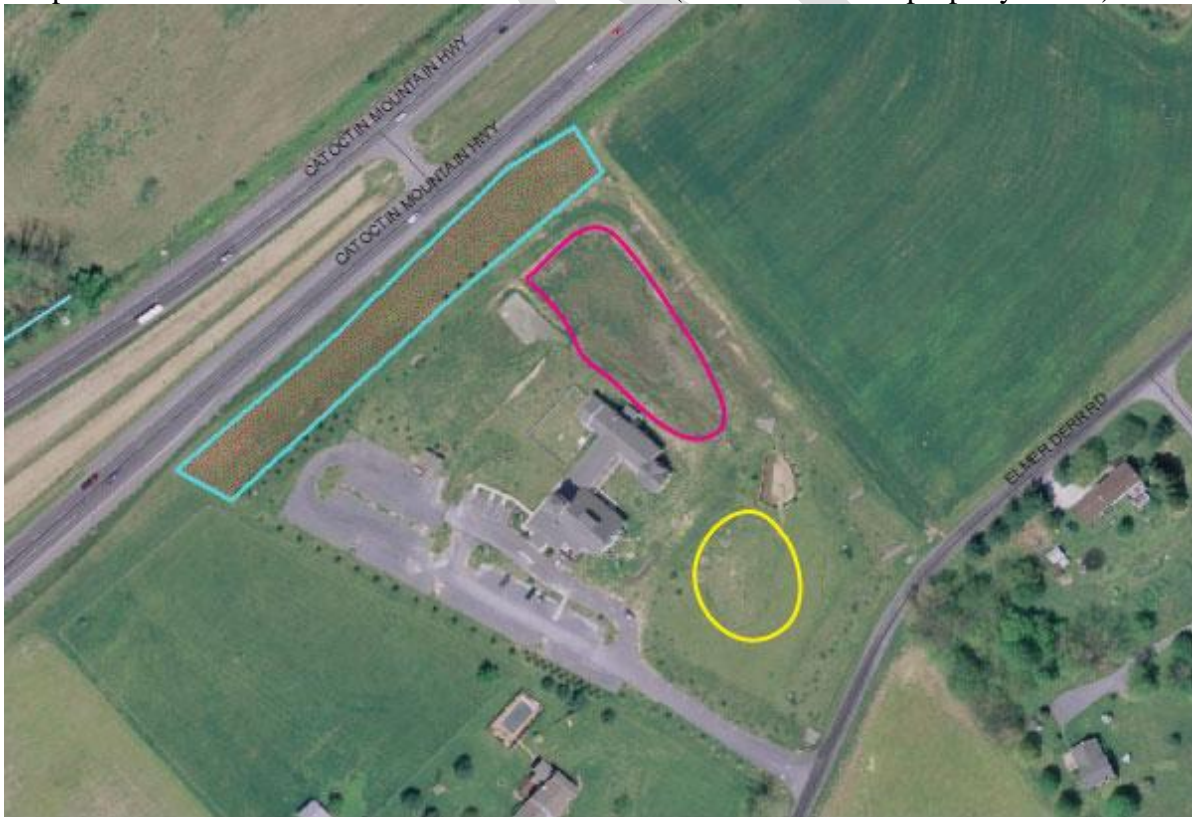
As a partner in the Monocacy & Catoctin Watershed Alliance, UUCF will network with individuals and organizations to improve the health of the Monocacy and Catoctin watersheds through “hands-on” restoration initiatives, including:

**1. Create a Seed Growout Station**

A [seed growout station](#) on UUCF property will enlist the youngest members of our congregation as watershed stewards and would be developed in conjunction with religious education class curriculum centered on water-related environmental justice issues. The seedlings raised through the program will be used in watershed planting initiatives such as those organized through MCWA.

**2. Improve Best Land Management Practices on UUCF Property**

UUCF strives to maintain its grounds using the most eco-friendly methods possible, including maintaining an array of native plants that control erosion, help prevent runoff, and provide much-needed habitat for local wildlife. (See aerial view of property below).



An aerial view of UUCF: the ROW Plantings are outlined in blue, the Drainfield Meadow Plantings in pink and the Water Detention Plantings in yellow.

*a. ROW (Right-of-Way) Plantings*

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In addition to plantings on our grounds, through MCWA we are working with the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (SHA) to convert a turf grass right-of-way that lies between UUCF and the Catocin Mountain Highway (MD State Route 15) into a native warm season grass meadow. ROW will plantings help control runoff of excess water and pollution from the highways into the watershed streams. They will also reduce required maintenance; at present, it takes about two hours to mow that stretch of land. Decreased mowing time will decrease our carbon footprint, and will save us money

*b. Drainfield Meadow Plantings*

The drainfield for our septic tank is on a hill. While trees and shrubs are commonly planted along stream banks to prevent erosion and runoff, a drainfield cannot be planted with woody plants, as the roots may penetrate the drains. UUCF's master landscaping plan calls for a meadow of native wildflowers and grasses to be planted over the drainfield and the rest of the hill, encompassing over an acre of land. In addition to keeping the soil healthy and controlling runoff, we want the meadow to look attractive from both our building and the road, provide habitat for wildlife, and eliminate a large tract of land from the necessity of mowing. Our drainfield meadow is in need of rehabilitating, and control of invasive plant species has been challenging. This spring the area is being mowed to prevent the many weeds from maturing and setting seed. We have already made important advisory connections through MCWA to create a plan to successfully re-establish this meadow.

*c. Water Detention Area Plantings*

A required water detention area was installed on the property when the building was constructed, built under terms of an easement with the government. The area is rimmed with a bluebird trail that is maintained by the youth group. In order to control erosion and maintain the integrity of the embankment, congregation members seeded the water detention area with native plants but control of invasive species has been challenging. A plan will be developed to rethink our plantings and to successfully control invasive plant species.

## **Watershed Restoration for the Community**

### **1. Watershed Restoration at Adopted Public Park in the Community**

UUCF is currently investigating options to adopt a local park through the Maryland [Adopt-A-Park](#) within the watershed, where we would do plantings and clean-ups as appropriate. By focusing our efforts on a specific site, we hope to foster a sense of project pride and ownership among our congregation members. We could track our progress and the difference we are making for watershed restoration. A park site would also be ideal for maximizing participation as it would be a safe environment conducive for families or social events.

### **2. Clean Water Summit for Community**

Watershed experts from both local government and non-governmental organizations will speak at the summit. The goal of the summit, which will be advertised to the general public,



will be to educate and inspire residents to contribute to efforts to restore and protect local watersheds.

**3. Watershed Projects in the Community**

For years, the UUCF Green Sanctuary Committee has promoted congregational participation in local watershed plantings and clean-ups coordinated by nonprofit organizations, including the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#), [Volunteer Frederick](#), and the [Maryland Chapter of the American Chestnut Society](#). We will continue to promote involvement in these and other community planting events coordinated through MCWA.

**3Timeline for Completion:** The Watershed Stewardship Project will kick off in 2011. The development phase of the project is expected to last three years.

| <b>Activity</b>                               | <b>2011</b>   | <b>2012</b>   | <b>2013</b>  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Water Conservation by Congregation</b>     |   |   |  |
| Water Conservation                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water survey by members</li> <li>Ask members to pledge water reductions</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members to retake survey</li> <li>Track collective progress</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to track collective progress</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Watershed Restoration on UUCF Property</b> |   |   |  |
| Partnership & Watershed Stewardship with MCWA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish UUCF as an officially recognized partner of the MCWA</li> <li>Post our contact information and watershed initiatives on the alliance web site</li> <li>Continue to participate in MCWA meetings</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to participate in MCWA meetings and projects</li> <li>Seek to recognized as a Watershed Steward by MCWA</li> </ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to participate in MCWA meetings and projects</li> </ul>                          |
| Seed Growout Station                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain and plant seeds in the fall</li> <li>Tend germinated seedlings for 2-3 years</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tend germinated seedlings for 2-3 years</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donate our first batch of seedlings for local restoration</li> </ul>                      |
| ROW Plantings                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate contact and partnership with MD SHA</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the ROW plantings with the help of the MD SHA and MCWA</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the ROW plantings with the help of the MD SHA and MCWA</li> </ul>                |
| Water Detention Plantings                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize a focused effort to eliminate exotic, invasive species</li> <li>Develop a plan for regular invasive species control.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add/Replace plants as necessary</li> <li>Implement Invasive species control</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue maintenance</li> </ul>   |
| Drainfield Meadow Plantings                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree on plan to revitalize the wildflower and grass meadow over drainfield</li> <li>Begin to prepare site</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reseed wildflowers and grasses</li> <li>Seek to certify our property as a wildlife habitat through the National Wildlife Federation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to certify our property as Bay-Wise through the Maryland Master Gardeners</li> </ul> |

| <b>Watershed Restoration in the Community</b> |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| Adopted Watershed Park                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold picnics &amp; family events at candidate parks</li> <li>• Make final selection of park to adopt for restoration and maintenance</li> <li>• Design plan</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete first year of restoration and maintenance</li> </ul>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete second year of restoration and maintenance</li> <li>• Make adjustments to the program as necessary</li> </ul> |
| Clean Water Summit                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin planning</li> <li>• Contact local watershed groups and experts</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek funding for summit</li> </ul>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold summit at UUCF</li> </ul>   |
| Watershed Activities in Community             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote participation in local watershed planting events</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote participation in local watershed planting events</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote participation in local watershed planting events</li> </ul>  |

### **Outcomes:**

The Watershed Stewardship project is a natural outgrowth of UUCF's commitment to conserving natural resources and implementing green practices in our operations. We will directly work with land management practices both on our grounds and in community parks and lands involving "hands-on" restoration initiatives of our Monocacy and Catoclin watersheds. As an Environmental Justice Project, this effort will directly contribute to local, county, and state efforts to improve our watershed health, the health of Chesapeake Bay, and access to clean, safe water by all.

Through this project, we expect to:

- Be recognized by MCWA as a [Watershed Steward](#) (a property owner who works to improve water quality and wildlife habitat on their property);
- Become a watershed conservation leader in the greater UU community by sharing our experiences and stressing the important connections between community and watershed health;
- Broaden our connections within our local community through our MCWA partnerships;
- Demonstrate to our congregation and others that small changes can result in big impacts when we work together;
- Track how our actions to restore and maintain our adopted park have resulted in a cleaner, healthier watershed habitat.
- Cultivate watershed stewardship principles and practices in congregation members of all ages.

**Lead:** Pam Gromen