



Green Sanctuary at UUCR - Status

Background

The Green Sanctuary Program is administered by the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA). A Green Sanctuary (GS) is a congregation that has received official recognition for completing the Green Sanctuary Program. Spiritual grounding of the program comes from our Seventh Principle that asks us to affirm and promote "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

In order to receive Green Sanctuary accreditation, a congregation must:

- Complete an environmental assessment, including an energy audit.
- Develop an action plan, with a minimum of twelve projects that are environmentally responsible and spread across the four focus areas: worship and celebration, religious education, environmental justice, and sustainable living.
- Spend 1-2 years creating and implementing their action plan.
- Report to a panel on successes, outcomes, and challenges in completing the action plan.
- Agree to continue environmental work after their action plan has been completed.

Process for Becoming a Green Sanctuary

1. Establish a Green Sanctuary Program Committee.

The Green Sanctuary Program Committee is an officially sanctioned, on-going (not temporary) committee with a designated chair. Members represent all aspects of congregational life including religious education, worship and celebration, communications, buildings and grounds, finance, social justice, and any other areas that are relevant in your congregation.

Status at UUCR The UUCR Green Sanctuary Charter was approved by the Board of Trustees on March 28, 2011. At the annual meeting on May 22, 2011, the congregation voted unanimously in favor of the following motion contained in the charter " *Be it resolved that the members of the UU Church of Rockville empower the Green Sanctuary Team to facilitate development of a 12 point Action Plan as a working document and approve the submission of the Action Plan to the UUA as part of its application for candidacy as a Green Sanctuary congregation. The Plan shall be approved by the Board of Trustees.*"

2. Conduct an environmental assessment.

Conducting an environmental assessment provides a snapshot of where your congregation stands with respect to their environmental behaviors. The assessment establishes the baseline or starting point for your congregation. In addition to an energy audit, the congregational assessment will include an assessment of:

- Worship and Celebration
- Religious Education - adult and children
- Environmental Justice
- Sustainable Living - grounds, parking lot, location, transportation, facilities, kitchen, food, recycling/reuseables, office and cleaning supplies, energy use, investment policies, congregation policies, congregation committees, etc.

Status at UUCR: The Green Team reviewed past issues of Quest and met with committees and church staff to gather information on the positive steps we have already taken (2-3 year look back) in the four focus areas: worship, religious education, sustainability and environmental justice. The assessment was completed in November 2011 and is being used to identify possible projects for inclusion in the action plan.

3. **Create an action plan. We are here**

Develop an action plan to outline projects that may address some of the things highlighted in the environmental assessment. The action plan includes a minimum of 12 projects within four focus areas and includes a communications strategy for sharing information about and inviting participation in projects.

Status at UUCR: The Green Team has compiled a list of projects proposed by members and friends and is seeking input to determine those activities with the most energy for action. As indicated in our Charter, the Board must approve the Action Plan prior to submission to the UUA.

4. **Apply for Green Sanctuary Candidacy.**

Submit Green Sanctuary Candidacy Application to the UUA Office of Congregational Stewardship Services along with the \$100 fee.

5. **Review feedback from a Green Sanctuary review team.**

Congregations are accepted into the Green Sanctuary Candidacy phase by Green Sanctuary review teams. After the review meeting, a letter is sent welcoming the congregation into the GS Program and providing feedback about the action plan.

6. **Make appropriate modifications to your action plan.**

Based on feedback from Green Sanctuary review team and changing circumstances, make appropriate modifications to your action plan.

7. **Complete your action plan.**

Have fun carrying out your projects in your action plan. Remember to celebrate your accomplishments as you go along. This phase can take 1-2 years.

8. **Apply for Green Sanctuary Accreditation.**

After completing or making significant progress on each of the twelve projects outlined in your action plan, complete an affirmative congregational vote to apply for Green Sanctuary Accreditation.

9. **Receive recognition as a Green Sanctuary.**

A Green Sanctuary review team will review your Green Sanctuary Accreditation application. After the review meeting, the Program Manager of Congregational Stewardship Services will draft a letter officially recognizing your congregation as a Green Sanctuary.

The Green Sanctuary Team meets on the second Sunday of the month after the service from 11:30am – 12:30pm in Room 52. The meeting is open to all.

For more information about the program including a link to the UUA Green Sanctuary Manual, go to <http://www.uua.org/environment/sanctuary/index.shtml>

More information about Green Sanctuary at UUCR is posted on the church website at <http://www.uucr.org/sj/environment/>. You may also contact the UUCR Green Sanctuary Team Co-Chairs Terrie Barr, terriebarr@comcast.net, 301-279-9292 or Mary Lanigan, malanigan1@comcast.net, 240-687-0517.