

United Centers for Spiritual Living
Social Issues Committee Recommendations
Creating a “Green” Center for Spiritual Living
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As the Global Heart Vision emerges in the world, it is our responsibility to be conscious stewards of the environment and preserve the sanctity of Creation. We see a world that has a renewed emphasis on beauty, nature, and love.... As we apply spiritual principles to our relationship with the earth, we treat All of Life as sacred. We encourage individuals and our spiritual communities to apply the following suggestions for “Greening our Spiritual Communities” in order to demonstrate local and global stewardship.

Getting Started

Form a Visioning Group for local and global earth stewardship.

Include the earth and nature in invocations, benedictions, meditations, and Spiritual Mind Treatments.

Bring music/songs into service that celebrates nature and the unity of all life.

Have live plants in the Center for Spiritual Living.

Place attractive recycle bins in conspicuous areas of the social hall and class rooms. Recycle Sunday bulletins, office paper, plastics, and cans.

Partner with community groups to support environmental/spiritual advocacy.

Encourage Board of Trustees (Core Leadership Teams) to consider the impact of decisions on the earth and the “next seven generations”.

Consider Green or Sustainable investments in your Prosperity Programs.

Center for Spiritual Living Energy Use and Facility Use

Turn off all lights, heat, and air conditioning in rooms when not in use. Create energy zones by closing off those rooms and halls when not in use. Hold classes and meetings in rooms that take the least amount of lighting and temperature control to be comfortable.

Replace all incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent or low wattage bulbs.

Contact your local utility company to see if you are on the most beneficial rate plan and schedule a free energy audit. Implement the recommendations for lowering energy usage.

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In renovations and new construction, use green certified products and lumber or wood alternatives; natural fibers in carpets, drapes, and upholstery.

Insulate and weather-strip the building.

Move toward energy self sufficiency by installing solar panels or wind power.

When hiring facilities supervisors or custodians, require a consciousness of earth stewardship and knowledge of sustainable building practices.

Use 100% post consumer recycled printer and copier paper.

Copy two sided documents, work books, and bulletins.

Buy recycled ink and toner cartridges and recycle them.

Use durable (washable) cups, plates, and stirrers for Sunday service and classes. Purchase recyclable items if not re-used.

Use toilet paper and paper towels with recycled content.

Use cloth towels in cleaning and laundry for re-use.

Use earth- friendly non-petroleum based (vegetable based) cleaning products.

Buy organic foods, locally grown and/or produced products when possible.

Center for Spiritual Living Outdoor Habitat – Holy Grounds

Plant a native “habitat garden” to attract birds and beneficial insects.

Create a meditation garden.

Have a maintenance plan free of harmful pesticides and herbicides.

Encourage “car pooling” to services and classes.

Organize an “adopt a plot” group for individuals to participate in the maintenance of the Center for Spiritual Living grounds.

Plant and label native plants that require less or low water use. Strive for “zero-irrigation” needs.

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Encourage “Bike to church” days.

Information & Education regarding Earth Stewardship

Create or support education/workshops about environmental stewardship and voluntary simplicity.

Host local environmental groups to gather at the center for spiritual living for workshops and speaker discussions.

Host “letter writing parties” on behalf of the environment as part of Spiritual Advocacy work.

Children and Youth Programs

Require Youth Directors to include environmental education/stewardship in Sunday school.

Sponsor recycling drives as a way for youth to earn money and become active in environmental spiritual advocacy activities.

Participate in Earth Day (April 22) activities.

Have Youth Church in the local park or a nature setting (if possible).

Present lessons and youth curriculum that includes environmental stewardship and sustainable living suggestions.

Encourage the Teen Program to take an active role in environmental stewardship activities.

Have Family Camp or sponsor a camping outing for your spiritual family.

Ministers & Practitioners

Demonstrate your willingness to “be the change” by driving a hybrid car, carrying a re-usable coffee mug and recycling.

Speak about the earth and environmental stewardship from the pulpit. Refer to Ernest Holmes quote on page 42 (SOM Text) “Spiritual wisdom says that God manifests through everything; that all is Divinity and the Nature Herself is the Body of God”.

Include nature, plants, and animals in your spiritual mind treatments and meditations.

Internet Guide to Green Resources

There is an abundant supply of resources available on the web regarding Green Living. Here are a few places to start if you are interested in becoming more informed about Green Spiritual Living.

Interfaith Resources

www.earthministry.org. www.WebofCreation.org.
www.nrpe.org (National Religious Partnership of the Environment)
www.nacce.org (No. American Conference of Christianity and Ecology)
www.crlc.org (Center of Respect of Life and Environment)

Recycling Resources

www.consrv.ca.gov (Calif. Dept. of Conservation) www.recycleproducts.org
www.epa.gov (Environmental Protection Agency) www.obviously.com/recycle
www.grn.com (Global Recycling Network) www.conservatree.com

Energy Conservation Resources

www.consumerenergy.org www.energy.gov www.energystar.gov
www.homeergy.org www.energyconservationinfo.org

Environmental Education – Global Warming

www.cnie.org (Center for the National Institute of the Environment)
www.epa.gov/greenkit www.epa.gov/enviroed www.eci-pros.com
www.envirolink.com www.worldwildlife.org www.generationearth.com
www.sierraclub.org www.audobon.org www.earthjustice.org www.nwf.org
www.climatecrisis.com

Available from the National Council of Churches – a comprehensive 4 page order form that includes books, pamphlets, annotated bibliographies, curricula, etc:
NCC – EnviroJustice Resources – POBox 986, Elkhart, Indiana 46515

The information about Greening Our Spiritual Centers has been a collaborative effort over many years with Science of Mind ministers, Practitioners, and dedicated congregants. A special word of thanks to Martha McCabe, RScP, author of the 2002 non-by-law Resolution regarding Earth Stewardship.

Be part of a monthly conference call to vision and share ideas about Environmental Spiritual Advocacy. Contact Rev. Hannah Rothlin at revhannah@ghspiritinnature.org chair of the Social Issues Environmental Sub-Committee or go to www.ghspiritinnature.org for more information.

