

## Checklist for Green Congregations: Building, Grounds, and Practices

Adapted for: Concordia Lutheran Church (February, 2009, finalized April, 2009)

**Audit Areas:** Property, Worship and Music (Altar Guild), Youth and Family, Kitchen (Funeral Group/Bridges) and Staff (Pastor David, Pam, Brett, Grant)

### **Response Categories:**

**X – Currently implemented (date started, if known);**

**D = Desire to implement**

**E = Early stage effort to implement, partially implemented;**

**N = Not applicable or not interested.**

### Section 1. Worship (6-15)

#### Altar Guild

1.  N Living flowers or plants on the altar to be kept or planted later outside. (Note; Sacrificial symbolization to use cut flowers. OK with flowers from garden)
2.  D? Living plants or trees in the sanctuary to purify air (need to be taken care of, finding right type that are low maintenance?)
3.  N Beeswax candles rather than (oil-based) paraffin wax candles. (too expensive and drip)
4.  D Use local wine for communion. (will look into)
5.  X Practice intinction or have re-usable glasses (not plastic) for communion.
6.  D Wash communion vessels/ glasses with eco-safe dish-washing detergent. (if provided)
7.  E Provide communion bread of whole grain, organic and locally grown.
8.  D Purchase fair trade palm fronds for Palm Sunday. (looking into)
15.  N Use live Christmas tree and then plant on church property.
16.  D Green decorations for holidays.
9.  N Limit or eliminate use of paper for bulletins. Re-use where possible. (Pam) (different services, only recycle)
11.  D Use post-consumer waste/ recycled paper for bulletins. (was been cost prohibitive, but will explore options)
10.  X Place basket near exit for recycling worship materials.
12.  D Consider the origin of the paraments made for worship (Altar Guild, Pastor)

## **Building**

13.  Use outside light where feasible.

14.  Use outside air and fans instead of air conditioner where feasible (limited use of AC in office).

## **Worship and Music**

17.  Worship outside in nature. (The main problem is the inability of people to hear when we are outside. Could revisit if this problem resolved)

18.  Safe disposal of batteries from wireless microphones. (explore using rechargeable batteries)

## **Section 1: Office (6-15) (Pam)**

1.  Use post-consumer/ recycled paper (30%)

2.  Paper-use guidelines to limit use and for efficient use/ reuse.

3.  Recycle paper, ink cartridges.

4.  Proper disposal of batteries, computers, printers, copiers.

5.  Limit mailings/ use e-mail.

6.  Unplug computers/ printers/ coffee makers/ microwaves when not in use.

7.  Use fair trade coffee, tea, chocolate.

8.  Healthy snacks. (except for Pam's dish)

9.  Purchase Energy Star appliances when replacing equipment. (should take inventory of current)

10.  Cut down on junk mail. Notify senders.

11.  Bring plants into office for beauty and to purify air.

12.  Use refilled/ recycled ink and toner cartridges when feasible. (don't think work well)

13.  Limit number of copies for use by groups.

14.  Use white or pastel color paper. Bright colors do not recycle.

## **Section 1: Education (6-15) (Youth and Family)**

1.  Art projects: avoid craft foam products and wax (oil-based) crayons. (will use up what we have and not purchase any more)

2.  Use recycled paper (whatever church office purchases)

3.  D  Provide recycling bins in classrooms.

4.  X  Limit photocopies of material.

### **Section 2: Coffee hour, receptions, and congregational meals (16-22) (Kitchen, Property)**

1.  E/X  Eliminate Styrofoam, plastic cups, and disposable paper and plastic products.

2.  X  Provide mug rack (sacristy has one. The kitchen as shelf devoted to mugs to us.

3.  X  Encourage people to "real" plates, cups, and utensils to meals and wash them .

4.  X  Provide ceramic plates and cups, glasses, and stainless-steel utensils.

5.  D/X  Purchase efficient Energy Star dish washer and other appliances.

6.  D  Use eco-safe dish-washing detergents and cleansers.

7.  D  Provide healthy/ organic/ locally grown food items for snacks and meals.

8.  D  Minimize waste from food or paper/ plastic products.

9.  D  If you cannot eliminate waste, use biodegradable plastic options now available.

10.  X  Use Fair-Trade coffee, tea, chocolate, etc. (Started in 2005)

11.  X  Share leftover food. Compost food waste (11/2008)

12.  E  Consider cloth napkins/ towels with member using laundry facilities at home (we already wash towels in home, open to limited number of cloth napkins?)

13.  D  Establish guidelines for the congregation and for outside groups using facility.

14.  D/X  For dishwashing and laundering, establish a church team, rotate use (those who use cloth items bring home)

15.  E  Avoid running water unnecessarily.

16.  E  Turn out lights when not needed.

17.  E  Unplug stove, microwave, and coffee maker when not in use.

18.  D  Use post-consumer paper products for napkins and towels.

19.  D  Get rid of soda machines/ Use refrigerator and honor system.

### **Section 3: Energy usage: Electricity (24-40) (Property, Grant)**

1.  N  Get off the grid with renewable energy: photovoltaic panels or wind mills. (M.Sawinski researched with MN power and is cost prohibitive. No grants for commercial buildings)

2.  E Replace all incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs. Exit lights.
3.  D Retrofit fluorescent lighting and replace bulbs with the most efficient available.
4.  E Use electric timers on some indoor and outdoor lights. Use motion sensitive lights.
5.  D Avoid (high energy) halogen lights.
6.  D Use photovoltaic panels for exterior lighting or church sign.

### **Section 3: Energy Usage: Heat (24-40) (Property)**

1.  N Get off the grid or purchase with renewable energy: geothermal, wind, solar (hot water). (M. Sawinski – without grant money, these are cost prohibitive)
2.  D Inspect, adjust, and clean all heating and air conditioning systems.
3.  D Remove obstacles from vents and registers.
4.  E Moderate heat throughout building to times and areas of use.
5.  X/E Use ceiling fans for cooling.
6.  D Raise thermostat for cooling in summer. Lower it in winter.
7.  D Fix leaking faucets.
8.  D Insulate hot water pipes and water heater. Use tank-less water heater.
9.  D Purchase high-efficiency, Energy Star water heater and dish washer.
10.  E Seal air leaks in door, windows, and gaps in the building envelope.
11.  D Insulate walls and ceilings.
12.  X Purchase energy-efficient windows. (Completed 09/06)
13.  E Use dishwasher only when full.
14.  D Limit meetings to certain nights/ times for energy consumption.
15.  D Foster practices among members to turn out lights when not in use.

### **Section 4: Paper and wood products (42-49) (Pam, Youth and Family, Property)**

1.  D Set guidelines for paper use for office, worship, and education.
2.  D Use recycled, chlorine-free office paper and envelopes for all uses.
3.  D Or provide certified paper (Forest Stewardship Council).

4.  D Use recycled paper for products in kitchen and bathrooms.
5.  E Reduce paper use in office, worship and education.
6.  D Provide handy paper recycling bins in various rooms.
7.  D Reduce junk mail. Request senders to eliminate or ask for single catalogues.
8.  N Purchase products—furniture/flooring/altars using only certified wood.
9.  D Plant trees on church property, at homes/ businesses of members, in community.

### **Section 5: Water use (50-63) (Property)**

#### *Kitchen*

1.  E Repair leaky faucets.
2.  D Do not let faucet run while doing other tasks.
3.  D Use dishwasher only when full.
4.  D Do not contaminate water. Use only eco-friendly dishwashing detergent.
5.  E Limit use of garbage disposals. Compost food waste.
6.  D Install low-flow (aerator) faucets and dish sprays.
7.  E Insulate hot water pipes.
8.  E Properly maintain plumbing system.

#### *Bathrooms*

1.  N Replace automatic flush systems with sensor, use-based flush system.
2.  D Use hand-motion sensors on faucets.
3.  D Repair leaky faucets and toilets.
4.  D Install low-flush toilets or composting toilets.
5.  D Install low-flow (aerator) faucets.
6.  E Insulate hot water pipes.

### *Fountain*

1.  D  Eliminate constantly running drinking fountains (need fountains for families/youth, possibly replace with more efficient, easy to reach models)
2.  N  Repair leaking fountains.

### *Outdoor church property*

1.  D  Landscape with native grass and plants that require little or no water.
2.  D  Turn a church lot into prairie.
3.  D  Put in rain gardens to absorb runoff.
4.  D  Landscape to absorb runoff. Avoid bare areas.
5.  X  Use mulching mower. (Purchased 06/08)
6.  E  Mulch trees, shrubs, flowers, and gardens.
7.  D  Eliminate/minimize pesticides, herbicides, and toxic fertilizer.
8.  D  Limit watering lawn. Water at dusk or dawn. Do not water during droughts.
9.  D  Use a rain barrel to collect for watering.
10.  D  Use down spouts to distribute water for watering plants and absorption.
11.  D  Install a roof-top garden.
12.  D  Install a grey water system for watering lawn and plants.
13.  D  Plant trees.
14.  D  Use fertilizers in accordance with soil test.

### *Parking areas*

1.  D  Install permeable surface for parking or walking area.
2.  D  Limit size of paved surfaces or eliminate with gravel and wood chips.
3.  D  Provide spaces in the parking area for trees and ground absorption.

### **Section 6: Green cleaning products (65-70) (Property, Grant) – Possibly use eco-safe products, if work as well and cost effective as current products (N/D). Inventory of current products completed.**

1.  N/D  Use eco-safe cleansers for restrooms, kitchen, dining areas, and other surfaces.
2.  N/D  Use eco-safe detergents/soaps/cleaners for dishes, hands, windows, communion vessels.

3. \_\_N/D\_\_ Use eco-safe cleaners/shampoos for carpets, tile floors, hardwoods floors.
4. \_\_N/D\_\_ Use eco-safe waxing products for floors.
5. \_\_N/S\_\_ Use eco-safe products for cleaning church machinery (mower?).
6. \_\_N/D\_\_ Use eco-safe detergents for washing cloth napkins, towels, and paraments.

### **Section 7: Food choices (71-80) (Funeral, Events)**

1. \_X\_\_ Provide healthy food for snacks and meals.
2. \_\_D\_\_ Purchase organic, locally grown food.
3. \_\_?\_\_ Purchase Fair Trade products where feasible.
4. \_\_N\_\_ Have a vegetarian potluck. Educate about the environmental impact of meat.
5. \_\_N\_\_ Sponsor a world hunger meal with beans and rice or other solidarity food.
6. \_\_N\_\_ Become a drop off point for Community Supported Agriculture. Encourage members to participate.
7. \_\_N\_\_ Plant a community garden to share with local food banks.

### **Section 8: Transportation (71-80), (Property, Worship)**

1. \_\_D\_\_ Install bike racks. Encourage walking to church.
2. \_\_D\_\_ Give information about public transportation.
3. \_\_D\_\_ Organize car pooling for church events.
4. \_\_N\_\_ Purchase/ use a van to transport people to church.
5. \_\_D\_\_ Reward pastors and other church workers for using high-mileage cars.
6. \_\_D\_\_ Designate car-free Sundays or months for worship.
7. \_\_D\_\_ Each month have someone check/correct tire pressure of cars in the parking lot.

### **Section 9: Indoor air quality (89-94) (Property)**

1. \_\_D\_\_ Test for asbestos, lead, formaldehyde, radon.
2. \_X\_\_ Address issues of mold, mildew, bacteria, and dust mites. (09/07)
3. \_\_D\_\_ Avoid volatile organic compounds from certain cleaning products, furnishings, fabrics, carpets, and paints.
4. \_N\_\_ Provide open windows for air circulation.

5.  D  Put selected plants indoors to serve as air purifiers.

**Section 10: Nature inside and out (95-98) (Property, Worship)**

1.  D  Plants inside: entrance, near windows, at the altar, around the baptismal font, in the office, in the narthex and other gathering spaces.

2.  D  Bring other life into the church: an aquarium, hamsters, birds.

3.  D  Create an indoor herb garden.

4.  X  Create an outdoor worship space or place of prayer.

5.  E  Create a tree sanctuary or memorial garden with benches.

6.  D  Be creative about the planting of trees, shrubbery, ivies, and flowers.

7.  D  On an open lot, create a prairie or a small preserve or an orchard.

8.  D  Use memorial funds and gifts to dedicate trees and natural spaces.

**Section 11: Recycling and waste (99-110) (Property, Kitchen)**

1.  E  Find out the recycling system in your area for all items. Aim for 100% recycling (aluminum, paper, glass, plastic, newspaper, cardboard)

2.  D  Assess what you buy and the packaging involved. Avoid Styrofoam. Pre-cycle!

3.  D  Consider reuse as option one.

4.  E  Recycle office paper (after use of both sides). Recycle newsprint and other paper.

5.  S  Recycle glass, plastic, steel cans, and aluminum cans.

6.  E  Consider a convenient recycling center in the church for cell phones, printer cartridges, household batteries, eye glasses, plastic bags, and gym shoes.

7.  D  Use biodegradable plastic bags for garbage.

8.  D  Compost food and yard waste.

9.  D  Have property committee or youth periodically assess church waste stream.

10.  D  Provide recycling information to members for home use (including toxic disposal).