

## **Results of NNED Survey on Environmental Sustainability 2009**

### **1. Some preliminary directions for the Task Force based on survey results:**

- Develop resource list of experienced UU environmental leaders willing to help guide other congregations
- Network current environmental activists – possibly with an NNED conference in conjunction with UU Ministry for Earth
- Connect UU Ministry for Earth to congregations needing information about UUMFE
- Develop web-based tool to share successes among congregations

### **2. Responses to environmental issues that many congregations engage in:**

- Sermons, readings, religious education program focus on environmental issues and earth-based spirituality
- Have attained or are working on getting Green Sanctuary Status
- Church wide green policies
- Recycling and composting systems (including waste prevention)
- Energy efficiency - assessment and reductions in church buildings
- Adult and family education for energy reduction and lower environmental footprint
- Films, discussion groups
- Church meals that use local food to educate
- Installed bike rack and organized car pooling
- Plant exchange
- Converting church lawn to garden or doing community plot and contributing food to local pantry
- Participate in Community Supported Agriculture and contribute a share to pantry, also began a Community Supported Fishery (which spawned 5 others)
- Provide compact fluorescent bulbs and canvass bags at pantry
- Buy-local campaign
- Congregation has membership with UU Ministry for Earth, Interfaith Power and Light or local community campaign
- Letter writing campaigns for legislation on environmental issues
- Offer symposiums, films, workshops to larger community
- Participate in (or started) interfaith or larger community groups to work on environmental issues

### **3. Highlights of NNED UU congregations' more unique projects:**

#### Exeter, NH

- Green Science Fair during coffee hour
- Junk mail stop through computer stations at coffee hour; collectively cancelled 1,312 pounds to be delivered per year, at 41 pounds per household
- Stewardship of 1 mile of beach to clean up monthly

#### Norway, Maine

- Tried to establish a solar co-op project
- We raise funds for small sustainable companies or groups that are

environmentally sound and that aspire to bring awareness to environmental issues.

Norwich, VT

- Creation of Spirit and Nature Path on our land

Ellsworth, Me

- We were a sponsor for a very well attended Focus the Nation event

Sanford, Me

- Created a Corner Cupboard (non food pantry) and invite clients to participate in events

Rockland, Me

- Our youth group has gone three times to New Orleans to help with the recovery. Katrina was a phenomenon of Global Climate Change, so this is environmental justice work. The women's association gave a scholarship to a young member to attend PowerShift '09 in Washington DC this March.
- We have started an email group to whom emails from national, local and international groups that are taking action on environmental fronts are sent. Many of these are structured so that people can send an letter to their government officials very easily. This means we are participating in many national campaigns right from our computers.
- 70 members of the church signed a letter to Senator Collins right after the election asking her to support Climate Change legislation asap. The letter was delivered by hand to her legislative aide.
- We started the first community supported fishery in Maine two years ago which has spawned 5 other CSFs. We are producing a cookbook on Maine shrimp with the Midcoast Fishermen's Association. This has been a community effort with people from all walks of life submitting and testing recipes. The book will be out in August and will discuss the importance of supporting sustainable fisheries.

Portsmouth, NH

- Our church is part of an interfaith sustainability team that is working to inform all faith communities on issues of sustainability. A member of our congregation is the facilitator for this group that includes Buddhist, Christian, Bahai, Quaker (Friends), Catholic, UU, Jewish, and others faith communities.

#### **4. What respondents said they need from the District**

- Networking. Sharing resources among congregations. Contact with congregations who have gone through what we are attempting in our congregation (Green Sanctuary Status, setting up programs, selling Fairly Traded goods, etc)
- A way to encourage someone in the congregation to focus and become passionate about this issue to lead
- Information on initiatives in which we might participate

- Workshops and training sessions to help us reach more people

Additional resources suggested:

- Money to: help us become Green Sanctuary, do solar fitting for our congregation. (There are ways to access funds – contact the UUA Green Sanctuary office and your District Staff)
- Help facilitating environmental activism to reach out to those who need the information, help motivating and supporting people to reduce CO2 more, etc.
- Help prioritizing the many important issues.
- A focused project – a carbon challenge, for instance – for all congregations to participate in.
- Easily accessible resources for lay led worship services on these issues.

## 5. SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES:

### #of Responses:

Total Number of Responses: 52 individuals

Total Number of Congregations: 35 of possible 75  
(15 from Maine, 11 from NH, 9 from VT)

### Respondent's Role in Congregation

Member	25
Friend	1
Env. Committee	16
B&G Comm.	5
Minister	7
RE	0
Other	11

### Environmental Issues of most interest/concern to congregation Environmental Issues congregation is working on

Climate change	27	17
Energy	40	33
Water	13	4
Food	29	20
Species Extinction	7	2
Habitat	15	4
Health, pesticides, toxics	15	9
Sustainable living	38	26
Environmental justice	16	13
Green economics	15	8
Other	5	8

**Congregation and Green Sanctuary Status**

Either candidate for certification or certified	18
Not sure what this is	1
Interested but not connected yet	5
Not interested	0
Other	16

**Congregation and Ministry for Earth**

Yes Individual or Congregational Membership	11
Applying now	1
Not sure what this is	13

**Activities that best describe congregational activity**

Educ and support for personal sustainable lifestyle	36
Educ all ages on issues	25
Greening the congregation	38
Legislative/political activity	20
Witness	4
Fundraising	8
Field action	7
Environmental Justice	11
Interfaith or community collaboration	17
Other	5

**Spiritual Connection to Environmental Work**

Earth Day worship and events	34
Classes, etc	15
Readings, etc in worship regularly	33
Cong events – retreats, hikes, field trips, etc	22
Other	11