

Village Church Recertified as an Earth Care Congregation



In March 2021, Village Church was certified as an **Earth Care Congregation** for the 11th consecutive year! When it became certified in March 2011, Village Church was the **23rd church** nationally to become an Earth Care Congregation. This number has now grown to over 200.

Earth Care Congregations is a program sponsored by PC(USA)'s **Department of Environmental Ministries**. The purpose of this program is to inspire churches to care for God's earth in a holistic way by incorporating earth care into their mission and ministry. For details, link to: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/earth-care-congregations/>

To become certified, a church affirms an **Earth Care Pledge** to integrate environmental practices and thinking into all aspects of its church life and to complete **projects and activities** in the 4 fields of:

- Worship
- Education
- Facilities
- Outreach

Certification is based on a scoring system that counts sustainable practices and earth care actions. See the Earth Care Pledge on the next page.

Using a scoring sheet, a church performs an environmental audit of activities and projects during the preceding calendar year. To become certified the first time, the minimum number of points required in each field of action is 25. Re-certification requires 50 points with a minimum of 5 points in each category.

Recertification is a recognition of what has been accomplished by various groups within the church (not just **EAC**). The **Earth Care Congregation** certificate has been framed and mounted on the wall above the drinking fountain between the Chapel and Friendship Hall, along with other **EAC** certificates and awards. The certificate refers to Village Church's "environmental stewardship achievements in worship, education, facilities, and outreach actions in the life of the church."

Certification honors churches that make the commitment to be stewards of God's Good Green earth and encourages other churches to follow their example. Also, members of the congregation are invited to participate as individuals by completing similar actions in their homes. Since the program began in 2010, Heartland Presbytery has had 5 Earth Care Congregations: Grace Covenant Church, Second Presbyterian Church, Rolling Hills Church, Westport Church, and Village Church.

Earth Care Pledge

Appendix D

The Social Justice and Peacemaking Unit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in consultation with congregations and presbyteries across the denomination, developed a five-part resolution as a model for mobilizing congregations to respond to the General Assembly's "CALL TO RESTORE THE CREATION." The resolution was simplified to a four-part pledge in 2010. Churches applying to be an Earth Care Congregation must have the Earth Care Pledge affirmed by their session and signed by the clerk.

Earth Care Pledge

Peace and justice is God's plan for all creation. The earth and all creation are God's. God calls us to be careful, humble stewards of this earth, and to protect and restore it for its own sake, and for the future use and enjoyment of the human family. As God offers all people the special gift of peace through Jesus Christ, and through Christ reconciles all to God, we are called to deal justly with one another and the earth.

1. Our **worship** and discipleship will celebrate God's grace and glory in creation and declare that God calls us to cherish, protect and restore this earth.
2. In **education**, we will seek learning and teaching opportunities to know and understand the threats to God's creation and the damage already inflicted. We will encourage and support each other in finding ways of keeping and healing the creation in response to God's call to earth-keeping, justice and community.
3. Our **facilities** will be managed, maintained and upgraded in a manner that respects and cherishes all creation, human and non-human, while meeting equitably the needs of all people. In our buildings and on our grounds we will use energy efficiently, conserve resources, and share what we have in abundance so that God's holy creation will be sustainable for all life and future generations.
4. Our **outreach** will encourage public policy and community involvement that protects and restores the vulnerable and degraded earth as well as oppressed and neglected people. We will be mindful that our personal and collective actions can positively or negatively affect our neighborhood, region, nation and world. We will seek to achieve environmental justice through coalitions and ecumenical partnerships.

Affirmed by:

Name of Congregation _____ City, State _____

Signature _____, Clerk of Session Date _____

Please send the signed Earth Care Pledge to Environmental Ministries as part of the completed ECC Application (Appendices C,D, and E).

Mail: Environmental Ministries, PC(USA), 100 Witherspoon St., Room 3221, Louisville, KY 40202

Email: environment@pcusa.org

Fax: 502-569-8116