



So you want to form a Green Team? GIPL can help!

Forming a Green Team

1. Recruit at least 3 friends from your congregation who care about sustainability as an aspect of faith.
2. Have a meeting with your faith/pastoral leader(s) to get their endorsement and support.
3. Research your own faith tradition's or denomination's environmental stewardship commitments or faith statements on the environment.
4. Become an officially blessed and recognized group by the governing entity of the congregation (e.g. Board of Directors, Deacons, Faith Leaders, etc.).
5. Schedule an initial meeting with your Green Team. Some things to accomplish in your first couple of meetings:
 - a. Craft a mission statement for your green team. If your faith tradition has a statement on creation care or sustainability as a faith practice, incorporate that into your mission statement.
 - b. Brainstorm about what you hope to accomplish as a Green Team. Go wild with this list - don't hold back. Then, highlight up to 3 action items that can be accomplished within the first 8-12 months of your formation as a green team.
 - c. Set a timeline of practical goals, both short and long term, that can be accomplished in your faith community.
 - d. Set a meeting schedule. It is recommended to meet once a month when getting started, but no fewer than once every two months.
 - e. Participate in a coaching session with a GIPL staff member.
 - f. Create brief communications plan so as to include green team initiatives in your congregation's communications tools (i.e., church newsletter, congregational website & social media)
6. Above all, **pray** together, **learn** together and **enjoy Creation together!**

Beginning Steps/Entry Points

1. Schedule a GIPL Power Wise energy audit and apply for an energy efficiency matching grant.
2. Register your Green Team with GIPL.
3. Begin drafting a Sustainability Policy for your congregation's events and catering. (Obtain sample policies from GIPL)
4. Plan one event in the first 4-6 months. This could be an educational class, a documentary screening, establishing a community garden or a tree planting. Or, consider "Greening" an event already planned for your congregation (ex: potluck fellowship dinner hosted by Men's Prayer Group).
5. Ask your faith/pastoral leaders to commit to including environmental sustainability & stewardship themes within the main worship service and/or religious education offerings on a regular basis. Schedule an Earth Day worship or prayer service to occur on or near April 22- Earth Day.

Developing Steps

Become Power Wise: Embracing Energy Efficiencies as a Powerful Creation Care Tool

1. Know how much energy your congregational facilities utilize by reviewing power bills.
2. Participate in the GIPL energy audit conducted by the professional engineer and review the energy conservation measures highlighted in the energy audit.
3. Meet with the congregation's property or facilities committee & staff to determine which energy efficiency projects to adopt and develop a timeline together.
4. Strive for 25% greater efficiencies and reduction in energy use and utility costs.
5. Apply for GIPL's Energy Efficiency Matching Grant - applications due November 15 and up to \$10,000 may be requested.
6. Identify volunteer to maintain your congregation's Energy Star Portfolio Manager database profile to track energy savings.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle & Rejoice! Being Waste Wise as a Faith Community

1. Establish a recycling program in your congregation. If you already have one, find ways to maximize its usefulness and visibility!
2. Conduct a waste audit using the guide on GIPL's website.
 - Examine your waste (trash) contract. Often times the price can be renegotiated to save your congregation money that can be used for the work of your Green Team.
 - Gather at least 3 volunteers to walk around the facility to complete the waste audit and interview other key community members on how waste is managed on site.
 - Craft a plan that reduces waste and implements cost-saving measures for recycling, composting, and landfill contracts. Communicate this plan with other congregational committees and staff.
3. Develop a plan to procure reusable dishware to reduce waste at congregational events.
4. Adopt a "No-Water-Bottles" policy for congregational events. Single-use plastic is a convenience item with a huge environmental footprint. Encourage people to bring water bottles to congregational events/meetings or use pitchers of water & cups.

Learn, Grow, Advocate for all of Creation: Education/Advocacy Opportunities

1. Host GIPL speakers as part of your religious education offering.
2. Schedule GIPL's Four Directions Fund workshop on "Active Hope." This makes you eligible to apply for \$300 seed grants for your Green Team activities.
3. Use the trainings and curriculum found in GIPL's free Creation Wise guides.
4. Host an advocacy-training workshop. Learn how to talk to your local and state officials about current environmental policy affecting your community.
5. Design an outing in partnership with GIPL. Coordinate a hiking trip, or a kayak/canoe adventure. Explore local nature trails near your congregation.
6. Explore youth programming that can incorporate Creation care principles and sustainability practices.

Long Term Goals

1. Obtain a free solar assessment from GIPL. Research options for procuring solar for your congregation.
2. Adopt a congregational sustainability policy that informs the work of other congregational committees and staff responsibilities. Assign Green Team participants to serve on other congregational committees as a resource on sustainability (i.e. serve on congregation's events committee to ensure that
3. Participate in community conversations to learn about how your congregation can contribute towards making the larger community more sustainable.
4. Develop partnerships with other faith communities to work towards communal sustainability initiatives. Plan interfaith or ecumenical eco-activities to build relationships across congregations.