

What is a Green Sanctuary?

The Green Sanctuary program was designed by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) to give roots and wings to the vision that, together, we can create a world in which all people act with reverence, gratitude, and care for the living Earth that is central to our lives. It provides a path for congregational study, reflection, and action in response to environmental challenges.

The Green Sanctuary program offers a way to join our efforts, both symbolically and explicitly, with thousands of other UUs in congregations across the country to work toward a vision of a healthier, more sustainable future.

The program has four focus areas:

- Environmental Justice - addressing human and environmental needs of those hit hardest by environmental crisis, and working in solidarity with communities most affected by climate change.
- Worship & Celebration - as we work together toward a cleaner, more just and sustainable world, worship enables us to stay connected and celebrate the work we have accomplished.
- Religious Education - to shape attitudes and practices.
- Sustainable Living - using fewer resources and being mindful of the choices we make.



ALUUC Green Sanctuary

The ALUUC Green Sanctuary program focuses on the congregation (building/grounds and its members), the Springfield community, and the world at large. It has five goals:

- to build awareness of societal environmental issues among UUs
- to generate commitment for personal lifestyle changes to benefit the environment
- to engage with the community on action on environmental issues
- to build a connection between spiritual practice and environmental consciousness
- to build awareness of, and rectify environmental injustice

What We Do

One of our first acts was to have a professional audit of energy conservation and sustainable practices at ALUUC. From there, we:

- installed energy-efficient UV window film
- retrofitted lighting (ballasts and lamps) as needed to more energy-efficient models
- incorporated a recycling program for paper and container waste
- limit our use of disposable tableware
- use non-toxic cleaning products where practicable
- installed solar panels on our roof---the first house of worship in the city of Springfield to do so!

What We Do (cont.)

We sponsor worship services to celebrate the earth at least on an annual basis (and usually in conjunction with a timely UUA action and/or study resource, such as *Blue Revolution: Unmaking America's Water Crisis*).

Green Sanctuary committee members and others in the congregation have participated in many lobbying efforts and rallies at the State Capitol to advocate for laws to protect the environment. Earth Day is always a popular rallying day!

A signature project of the Green Sanctuary committee was the creation of a one acre Prairie Garden with native vegetation; this was established with the help of a grant from the Illinois Native Plant Society and the sweat equity of many ALUUC members. This Prairie Garden provides a reduced carbon footprint, increased wildlife habitat, educational resources, seasonal altar flowers, space for contemplation, seed source, minimal maintenance, and no mowing! Plants include: nodding wild onion, blazing star, black-eyed Susans, purple coneflowers, penstemons, prairie dock, and compass plant.



Eco-Camp

Although not a project of the Green Sanctuary committee, Eco-Camp (a project of the larger ALUUC congregation) *does* meet the goals set by the Green Sanctuary committee!

Eco-Camp is a week-long day camp for children between the ages of 5-12, with teens assisting the adult camp counselors. There is no charge for attending camp, but donations are gratefully accepted. Daily themes explore the traditional five elements: earth, air, fire, water, and spirit. Activities include scientific demonstrations, games, songs, arts/crafts, stories, nature activities, scavenger hunts, green technology, growing food, recycling, and more. Campers demonstrate some of what they've learned at the downtown Farmer's Market on the Saturday after camp, and have a graduation celebration at the following Sunday Service.

It's a fun way for kids to learn to be good environmental stewards for the "web of life".



How Can I Get Involved?

Easy! The Green Sanctuary Committee meets once a month, usually on the third Sunday after services (generally around noon).

For more information you can contact the current chair of the Green Sanctuary Committee: GreenSanctuary@aluuc.org

You can also keep a watch in the ALUUC newsletter for actions the Green Sanctuary committee is taking part in, or work days for Facilities or the Prairie Garden.

Links!

UUA Green Sanctuary Program:
<http://www.uua.org/environment/sanctuary>

UU Ministry for the Earth:
<http://www.uuministryforearth.org/>

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) Environmental Justice:
<http://www.uusc.org/focus-areas/environmental-justice>

Environment News Service:
<http://ens-newswire.com/>

Northwest Earth Institute:
<http://www.nwei.org/>

Union of Concerned Scientists:
<http://www.ucsusa.org/>

Green Sanctuary ALUUC



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