

**Report to Churches and Participants**  
**Main Line Interfaith Environmental Symposium & Workshops**  
**Wednesday, October 7, 2009**

**The worst offense to God is to destroy his creation**

The Main Line Interfaith Environmental Symposium began at 5:30 p.m. with registration, nametags, coffee, video displays of Equal Exchange fair trade products and displays of environmental resources. At 6:00 p.m. Rev. Joseph DiPaolo welcomed the group with a convening prayer. Marge Miller explained Symposium guidelines and procedures. At 6:15 p.m. State Senator Andy Dinniman presented an eloquent and thoughtful Keynote on the importance of each person's faith-based Environmental Stewardship commitment and using our faith as a determinant in making political and community decisions. Courtenay Willcox, Main Line Interfaith Green Group, and Rev. Ben Hartley spoke about opportunities for interfaith action, including the [www.350.org](http://www.350.org) International Day of Climate Action on October 24, building awareness that, at 390 parts per million of CO<sub>2</sub>, we have exceeded the 350 parts per million of carbon, that scientists and climate experts say is the safe limit for our atmosphere. For all of human history until 200 years ago, our atmosphere contained 275 parts per million or carbon dioxide. At 7:00 p.m., attendees went through the supper buffet line and took their plates to their assigned workshop rooms where cider and water were available. At 8:00 p.m., there was a break and participants went to their second workshop. At 9:00 p.m. the workshops concluded and participants returned to Fellowship Hall for a program wrap-up and summary of the six workshops. The Symposium adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

The following resources were highlighted during the symposium workshops

- ∞ Pastoral Leadership and the Stewardship of Creation, Rev Joseph DiPaolo, <http://greenletterbible.com>
- ∞ Controlling Energy Costs for Religious Congregations, Andrew Rudin, [www.interfaithenergy.com](http://www.interfaithenergy.com)
- ∞ Greening of our Religious Facilities, Andy Smith, [www.cbcwayne.org](http://www.cbcwayne.org) look for the Guide to Greening Church Operations
- ∞ Local Farms = Healthy Communities, Jason Ingle [www.greenerpartners.org](http://www.greenerpartners.org)
- ∞ Renewable Energy Credits – How they Help Finance Renewable Energy Projects, John McCawley, [www.peco.com](http://www.peco.com), click on Going Green at the top
- ∞ How Green are my Gadgets?, Bill Finch, [www.Altern-Energy.com](http://www.Altern-Energy.com)

The following resources were also highlighted at the symposium

- ∞ [www.350.org](http://www.350.org) and [www.350philly.org](http://www.350philly.org)
- ∞ <http://interfaith.equalexchange.com> Equal Exchange fair trade products
- ∞ [http://www.gbqm-umc.org/umw-epac/green\\_team.htm](http://www.gbqm-umc.org/umw-epac/green_team.htm) Countdown to Copenhagen, for the extension of the Kyoto Protocol
- ∞ <http://www.wayneumc.org/environment.html> Wayne United Methodist Church, Growing a Greener Spirit
- ∞ <http://new.gbqm-umc.org/umcor/newsroom/releases/archives09/raiseanecopalm> Eco Palms
- ∞ [www.pennfuture.org](http://www.pennfuture.org) PennFuture
- ∞ [www.pennenvironment.org](http://www.pennenvironment.org) Penn Environment
- ∞ [www.ansp.org/environmental](http://www.ansp.org/environmental) Philadelphia Interfaith Network for Environment, look for Interfaith information on the home page
- ∞ [www.greenamericatoday.org](http://www.greenamericatoday.org) Green America
- ∞ [www.greenfestival.com](http://www.greenfestival.com) The Green Festival
- ∞ [www.greenandsave.com](http://www.greenandsave.com) Green and Save

The report of the workshops follows:

**1. Pastoral Leadership & the Stewardship of Creation:**

**Rev. Joseph DiPaolo, Senior Pastor, Wayne United Methodist Church, presenter;**  
**Rev. Ben Hartley, facilitator**

- A. The presenter shared about the importance of “first principles” in teaching about creation-care and the importance of using theological language (such as creation care) rather than the language of “environmentalism” which avoids the theological meaning of “creation”.
- B. There was a significant amount of discussion about ways to encourage congregational action on an issue such as this where some feel very passionate about it and others are skeptical of the need to be so passionate about creation care.
- C. Several of the participants noted ways in which they sought to encourage people to see that creation care and other social justice issues are related to one another.
- D. A feeling of frustration was expressed by several persons in the group concerning the lack of pastoral leadership on this or lack of sustained congregational interest on the issue.
- E. A desire for deeper reflection on this was also noted during our session. There was a sense that such deeper reflection was not present as much as some participants would like. This is an important issue for pastors to lead their congregations.

## **2. Controlling Energy Costs for Religious Congregations:**

**Andrew Rudin, Project Coordinator, Interfaith Coalition on Energy;**

**Art Miller, facilitator**

- A. Rudin is an environmental engineer associated with the Interfaith Coalition on Energy, a non-partisan resource specializing in energy use in places of worship. He has worked at a number of churches in the U.S. and several thousand in the Philadelphia metropolitan area.
- B. He pointed out that a place of worship is very different from a private dwelling. It normally is subject to only intermittent use, and has a large amount of window area and large spaces to control temperatures.
- C. Decision-making concerning energy use is also different from a private home. Whereas the individual homeowner often makes energy saving decisions and acts on them, the church usually relies on an environmental committee. Differences of opinion and philosophy sometimes make energy decisions difficult. A non-partisan, expert third party can evaluate a facility, point out areas of energy savings and recommend possible courses of action.
- D. Much energy saving is often centered on controlling space temperature. He referred to the public areas of a church as the “sacred areas”. The boiler room and associated back spaces he called the “profane areas”. Most of the cost savings will be in the profane areas. For example, he said that some facilities have installed two boilers to generate heat; if one boiler fails, you have an immediate back-up boiler; then you can replace the failed boiler with an updated and more efficient model.
- E. Main Line Unitarian had an energy audit in 2003. From the energy cost savings the audit produced, Main Line Unitarian switched its electricity source from the power company to 100% wind power, at a slightly higher cost but a more environmentally friendly source of electricity.
- F. Andy Rudin pointed out that no place of worship in Pennsylvania should be paying state tax on its energy usage. Non-profits do not have to pay this tax although a number of churches do so.

## **3. Greening our Religious Facilities:**

**Andy Smith, Chair, Ecology Mission Group, Central Baptist Church, & Joy Bergey, Federal Policy Manager, Penn Future & member Chestnut Hill UMC , presenters; Bill Gardiner, facilitator**

### **Andy Smith**

- A. Have a group in your church that works on the issue
  - a) Unless you have a group dedicated to this, the issue gets lost
  - b) Don't just focus locally; for example, think of your watershed; Everything is related and God is a part of it
- B. Find various ways to get the congregation involved
  - a) Have a class or a series of classes on environmental issues (i.e. energy, climate change, our place in the universe)
  - b) Have a worship service dedicated to the issue
  - c) Have regular pieces in the newsletter
  - d) Host outside speakers

- e) Sell fair trade products to the members
- f) Sell compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) to the members, although this has passed its peak due to market saturation)
- g) Create relationships with outside organizations
- C. Focus on energy consumption
  - a) Conduct an energy audit
  - b) Find ways to make your facility more efficient
  - c) Use renewable energy sources (wind, solar, etc.). Purchase wind-generated electricity from PECO
  - d) Central Baptist Church installed a PV solar array at a cost of \$84,000; \$55,000 came from a PA Department of Environmental Protection grant and \$10,000 from a Department of Community and Economic Development grant. It generates 11,600 kw/year; provides \$1,740 worth of electricity to the church each year; provides \$2,400 “revenue” to the church from the sale of electricity to PECO, and has a good payback of about five years, taking grants into consideration.
- D. Use green practices
  - a) Central Baptist Church wrote a manual in 2003 of green practices – “Guide to Greening Church Operations” which is available online at [www.wayneumc.org](http://www.wayneumc.org) by clicking on “Growing a Greener Spirit” and soon on [www.cbcwayne.org](http://www.cbcwayne.org)
  - b) Look at your electrical usage and act accordingly. Example: drink machine put in to “make money” cost \$600/year in electricity.
  - c) Use the Kill-A-Watt to analyze your church and home
  - d) For cleaning, use environmentally friendly products such as Sun & Earth
  - e) Look at your landscaping -- plant deciduous trees for shade; use native plants
  - f) For hospitality, use local food sources and recyclable utensils
  - g) For office, reduce paper use and use recycled copier paper

### **Joy Bergey**

- A. Works with Penn Future and as a federal lobbyist
- B. Became a member of Chestnut Hill UMC in the 1980’s because the members of the church cared about the environment; they formed a group to support one another spiritually
- C. When you contact your legislator, tell him or her that you are "a person of faith" and that you care about God's creation
- D. She represents her congregation at the annual denominational meeting of the Eastern Pennsylvania United Methodist Conference comprising 450 churches. Each year she introduces a resolution to the conference asking legislators to pass global warming legislation and she takes time to talk about the issue to about 800 people in attendance.
- E. Act 129 -- PECO will have \$350MM to lend to non-profits. This will provide 25% of the cost of energy audits and will have tax credits and rebates for residents, businesses, municipalities and non-profits. The PUC has just approved PECO’s proposed plan. The programs will start to roll out in early 2010.
- F. How do you get your church going on this? Find one committed lay person and one committed clergy member
- G. Look out for PECO rate increases at the end of 2010, projected to be 10-20%. All the more reason to enact energy efficiency measures within the next 12 months so as to cut usage and keep costs flat after the rate caps expire on 12/31/09.

### **Guest comments and questions**

- A. Mike Weilbacher, former host of “Earth Talk” on WHY, reported that Temple Beth Am Israel uses 100% wind -- the offering was described as an opportunity to contribute to the temple and make a difference for the environment. The offering was oversubscribed.
- B. How do you know wind energy \$\$ are really going there? Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection monitors this.
- C. I’m from a church with older people who don’t care. What do I do? Get the pastor involved.
- D. My pastor doesn’t care. What do I do? Get a group from the congregation to talk to the pastor.

#### **4. Local Farms = Healthy Communities:**

**Jason Ingle, Executive Director, Greener Partners, presenter; Kelly Tickner, facilitator**

- A. Talking about farms in the context of the Main Line community and also the movement for sustainability may seem odd, but it makes sense. Regarding food production embedded within our denser communities, community farms matter because:
  - a. It gives children a chance to experience nature and learn where food comes from and why it matters.
  - b. It gives adults a chance to counter-balance the velocity of life by participating in the rhythm of a farm
  - c. It gives communities a chance to be more incorporative through casual events and programs that promote a sense of place.
- B. From a sustainability standpoint, agriculture and local food have a very important role: eating local, organic food every day makes a bigger difference than driving a hybrid or switching to CFL light bulbs. Local, sustainable farming will:
  - a. Improve our watersheds by reducing the use of synthetic fertilizers by integrating on-site composting and green manure systems
  - b. Reduce soil erosion by using cover-crops and no-till methods
  - c. Reduce food miles and fossil fuel use by producing food closer to market
  - d. Lessen the use of energy by needing less refrigeration for shipping and storing
  - e. Reduce waste by lessening the need for plastics and packaging by selling more direct through CSA and farmers markets
- C. Greener Partners mission is to drive the convergence of five important elements together to improve our overall world, focusing on:
  - a. Youth
  - b. Wellness
  - c. Education
  - d. Environment
  - e. Community

We do this through collaboration (with any number of groups, from arboretums to schools, corporate campuses, to hospitals) to magnify our overall societal impact.

#### **5. Renewable Energy Credits – how they help finance renewable energy projects;**

**John McCawley, Director of Energy Acquisition, PECO Energy; Jenny Wannenburg, facilitator**

- A. Renewable energy is produced without harming the earth.
- B. The following are NOT renewable: coal, natural gas, nuclear, large scale hydro electric
- C. The following sources ARE renewable: biomass (from plants & plant derived materials, landfill gas, small hydro electric, geothermal (from heat beneath the earth's surface), turbines under the water (up/down movement), wind energy, solar energy
- D. In our homes, items that consume most energy are: air conditioners, refrigerators, lighting.
- E. Efforts are being advanced to improve the way in which we use energy. Examples: smart meters, which can receive inputs and information, and use of the smart grid, which incentivizes people to stop using electricity during peak hours.
- F. Renewable energy credits are "traded". Credits are measured in megawatt hours. This is equivalent to one 60watt bulb burning 24/7 for 2 years. States have a database/registry which registers the output of renewable energy. Companies can then trade their credits.
- G. There are two markets for renewable energy: voluntary (like PECO Wind energy- the 5<sup>th</sup> most subscribed in the nation) and mandatory (where states are required to buy some renewable credits). PECO will shortly announce plans for trading solar energy in addition to wind energy.

#### **6. How Green Are My Gadgets:**

**Bill Finch, founder, Alternative Energy, Inc., presenter; Paul Shillingford, facilitator**

Presenter, Bill Finch, first mentioned the Big Picture. The cost and supply of fossil fuel is a growing concern. Continued reliance on carbon-based energy impacts the quality of the environment, your family's health, and is clearly linked to global warming. He stated the ways of dealing with God's Creation: Preservation, Conservation, and Efficiency. His company deals with efficiency.

- A. The rate caps come off PECO in 2020 and energy rates are estimated to rise 20-60%. It would therefore benefit everyone to get an energy audit either professionally or by doing a self-audit using some of the instruments available to measure the output of various appliances. He had many of these devices on display.
- B. The use of power strips will reduce the electrical drain of many of the products in our homes (i.e. TV, microwave, chargers, etc.) and the use of fluorescent and LED lights.
- C. Solar panels and wind are a way to reduce our use of oil and coal, and his company has them for use on big (hot water heating) and small (cell phones, battery chargers, etc.) applications.
- D. Water Conservation is also important in caring for God's Earth and he showed ways to decrease consumption by using flow control and rain barrels.
- E. Many of the devices talked about not only reduce our "carbon footprint" but also save money. More information on how to obtain the products mentioned can be found by going to Alternative Energy, Inc. website at [www.altern-energy.com](http://www.altern-energy.com).

### **Courtenay Willcox closed the Main Line Interfaith Environmental Symposium with Prayer for Environmental Symposium**

*God of all of us*

*God of each of us*

*God of all creation*

*And God of all things*

*The Psalmist wrote: When we look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,*

*The moon and the stars that you have established;*

*What are human beings that you are mindful of them,*

*Mortals that you care for them?*

*Yet you have made them a little lower than God*

*And crowned them with glory and honor.*

*Let us be deserving of this honor and glory and return it to you as we work to be good stewards of your creation, the creation that you placed under our feet. Let us not crush it, but tread gently, with humility and care as we seek to preserve the delicate balance you set in motion.*

*The brilliance of your creation echoes throughout the ages. Our awe is the same now as in centuries past.*

*In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, A-ben-ezra said,*

*"Whenever I turn my eyes, around on Earth or to the heavens*

*I see You in the field of stars*

*I see You in the yield of the land*

*In every breath and sound, a blade of grass, a simple flower,*

*An echo of Your holy Name.*

*God, let it be so with us. AMEN*

### **Symposium Feedback offered on evaluation forms included the comments below:**

#### **1. What did you like best?**

Bringing people together; sharing resources; availability of community resources and experts; the workshops; connecting with wonderful like-minded people who want to take action; ability to interact with speakers; Senator Dinniman's keynote presentation; the spirit of the community and the interest in earth's custodianship; the benediction; everything was interesting; covered most areas of concern; lots of good information & ideas; networking; variety of topics; the fact that all attendees had a common goal to work with the environment.

## **2. What would you suggest changing?**

Nothing; short supper was nice but might have been good for networking; open up dialogue on which environmental items really help vs. feel good projects; more time for questions & discussion; try to reach more people and organizations.

## **3. What environmental issues are you currently working on?**

Advocacy; education of congregational leaders; networking with community resources; bringing green energy and conservation to our area; advocating green practices; getting biodiesel grant for school district; considering geothermal vs. current system; establishing church-wide recycling; food health; environmental protection; global warming; getting our Green Team started; composting; walking more & driving less; energy independence; sustainable agriculture; greening our synagogue; how to save money on heating & cooling at home; renewable energy; conservation; water quality; impacts of coal mining, impact of Marchellus Shale; reducing church energy costs; coffee mugs, getting our pastor more involved

## **4. What environmental issues should be our top priorities this coming year?**

Energy efficiency and global warming; more emphasis on clean energy generation; reduction of green house gases; sustainable agriculture; energy technology; conservation; greening our lives; weighing in politically; reduce energy demand; getting state and federal legislators to better understand the issues; renewable energy; global warming;

## **5. Would you welcome more interfaith projects & activities?**

YES!

## **6. If so, what would you like to see?**

Large group symposiums, interfaith advocacy and action; establish an advocacy panel; resource-sharing among groups; lobbying elected officials; cooperative Earth Day celebrations; organize an Interfaith Council on Environment; youth programs; environmental websites; more electronic communication; updates to see if people are following through with ideas;

## **7. How can we help our congregations “Go Green”?**

Advocate, Educate, Support; keep up the hard work; raise awareness; use Faith language and theological basis for decisions; educate building committees about what can be done to reduce energy consumption; seek commitments to remain actively involved as citizens; following through; getting focused and staying that way; promote support at leadership levels – at ministerial meetings; seek commitment and involvement of the clergy

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