

Unitarian Church of Montpelier Green Sanctuary Policy
Written by the Living Lighter Committee
Adopted by the Executive Team 3/18/15

Introduction: The Unitarian Church of Montpelier was granted continuing Green Sanctuary status by the UUA in the spring of 2014. The award requires the Church to perform certain tasks and follow certain principles. These policies are designed to provide details on how the congregation fulfills its mission of “protecting the Earth, our home” and to provide a model that the Church strives to achieve.

1. Sunday services throughout the year will include readings, hymns, anthems and sermons which contain the themes of sustainable living and respect for the Earth. At least one service a year will be entirely devoted to one of these themes. These services and parts of services will include RE children so they are made aware of the concepts of sustainable living and actions which protect the Earth.

2. The RE program will include readings, songs and activities which introduce and encourage children to behave in ways that are Earth friendly and sustainable.

3. In the day to day operation of the Church building, practices which are Earth friendly will be used. These include:

3A. Reducing use of energy in lighting and heating:

3A1. by installing the most energy-efficient light bulbs currently available;

3A2. by adjusting the thermostats in the building to temperatures which result in the least use of fuel oil consistent with protection of inner surfaces and instruments (piano, organ);

3A3. by installing devices and insulation to reduce the use of fossil fuel consistent with budgetary allowances;

3A4. by insuring all storm windows are lowered at the beginning of the heating season; and

3A5. by insuring that any new construction or renovations include energy-saving devices or techniques.

3B. Reducing the use of non-recyclable materials in the Church building and by Church members:

3B1. by using, as much as possible, only dinnerware (plates, cups, flatware, etc.) that can be recycled and/or kept out of the landfill. This includes all Church-run functions and all rentals;

3B2. by conserving paper by using two-sided copies;

3B3. by providing receptacles for recyclable and compostable materials throughout the Church building and insuring that these materials are properly disposed of; and

3B4. by providing opportunities for members to bring in materials which are recyclable through the Alternative Recycling Center and for use in the Women's Alliance rummage sales, and by encouraging members to use this facility and the ReSource on their own to recycle unwanted materials.

3C. Providing signage near recycling/composting receptacles and thermostats which provide information on how to save energy, and on how and what to recycle.

4. The Living Lighter Committee will be involved with a project in the local community which encourages local residents to learn and follow the practices of protecting the Earth and living sustainably.

5. The Church will seek ways to make use of the grounds surrounding the building in a way that provides:

5A. a demonstration of growing local food; community members will benefit by learning how local space can be used to grow edible food and will receive some of the food produced.

5B. a demonstration of how urban shade trees can be grown and maintained, thereby shading heat-absorbing surfaces while facilitating carbon uptake; community members will benefit by learning how planting and maintaining urban shade trees reduce the heat bubble of an urban area while reducing CO₂ in the atmosphere.