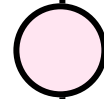
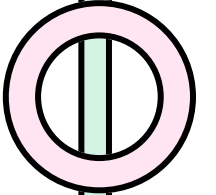
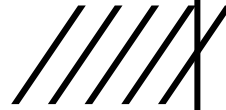


PRESBYTERIANS FOR EARTH CARE

FORMING PRESBYTERY
EARTH CARE TEAMS- WHAT
CASCADES PRESBYTERY HAS
LEARNED



○ Presbyterians Strive to Be Connectional! Connecting (and plotting subversion) at UN Climate Conference in Montreal -

Jenny Holmes, Rev. Rob Marks and Rev. Bill Somplatsky-Jarman



○ Short History of the Eco-Justice Team in Cascades Presbytery

The first committee formed in response to the “timber wars” in the late 80’s centered around protection of Old-Growth forests were raging. The focused was helping people understand Christian stewardship of Creation and supporting dialogue among people of different viewpoints. Cascades built on timber \$\$.

- In 1995, the Restoring Creation Enabler (RCE) program started. Presbyteries were encouraged to designate an RCE. I was selected to serve. Initial tasks were organizing educational events and forming a team under the Church and Society
- Eco-Justice Team’s mission was to integrate care for Creation into the life of the Presbytery and engage congregations.
- First several years involved lots of workshops to equip congregations to go green and a regular presence in all communication channels of Cascades. **KEY: Repetition in multiple forms of communication from different spokes people is essential for ideas to take hold.**



○ Short History, Continued

- Soon, were bringing resolutions to our presbytery on topics such as energy and climate change. Usually coupled with pre-presbytery workshops or a presentation on the floor of presbytery. Example: Climate scientist, Philip Mote, spoke on climate science and how it fit with his Presbyterian faith and Republican values.
- Addressed controversial issues affecting congregations in our Presbytery such as the 2000 water cut-off to farmers in the Klamath Basin to protect endangered fish. Provided background on the crisis and the different viewpoints. **KEY: Being a resource for the Presbytery on difficult environmental issues, built credibility with the presbytery and strengthened relationships.**



○ Short History, Continued

- In 2002, we hosted PEC's national conference, "Earth's Energy, God's Light" at Linfield College in McMinnville. This helped to raise our profile at Presbytery.
- Promoted concrete actions for congregations to take such as switching to Fair Trade coffee, creating wildlife habitats, green building, water stewardship, greening Vacation Bible School, supporting local and sustainable food systems, starting community gardens, and more.
- **KEY: These recommended actions were supported with 1.) a workshop (s), 2) a "Good Earthkeeping" fact sheet, 3) Communications in Presbytery and 4) recognition of congregations taking action.** Having people with expertise on the team was also very valuable. We also recruited people leading these actions to be on the team.
- In 2003, we hosted ACSWP in the Klamath Basin for a field trip and meeting on water rights and takings. A motion passed at the last minute on the floor of GA that had some problems that needed to be corrected.
- Started annual "Creation Care Fellowship" conference that continued for several years



○ Short History, Cont.

- Activities to green congregation continued, but around 2010 we felt called to get people out to experience God's Creation. Held "Creation Explorations" including hikes and kayaking trips. **KEY: We did what was renewing and enjoyable to us as a team and tapped members expertise.**
- Promoted Earth Care Congregations program acknowledge congregations that got certified.
- In 2013-14 we worked with Seattle Presbytery to concur with a resolution on fossil fuel exports. Sent Eco-Justice Chair, Barry McPherson to GA in 2014 as overture advocate.
- In 2016 we organized four field trips for General Assembly held in Portland and assisted with PEC table.





More recently

- Assisted PEC in organizing its 2017 Conference “Blessing the Waters of Life” at Menucha.
- Used the opportunity to build relationships with Native Americans.
- Held field trip to with Native American fishing guides from the Warm Springs Tribe.
- To follow up held 2018 boat trip on the Columbia River with Native American speakers.
- Participants signed a letter to US Army Corps asking for Native voices to be heard in the update of the Columbia River Treaty governing management of the dams on the river in the US and Canada. **KEY: Include an action with education to empower people to act on their knowledge.**



○ GA Tour of Earth Care Congregations



○ June 2017 Fishing Trip



○ What has been especially helpful to us?

- Having a presbytery staff who helped us navigate the system.
 - This led to us becoming lodged under Congregation Support.
 - Like many presbyteries, Cascades has been increasingly focused on supporting congregations in their ministries. Less on supporting programs.
 - Understanding of staff that environmental concerns are important in the NW, especially with younger generation.
- Having strong connections with denominational offices and with Presbyterians for Earth Care.
 - Enabled us to use programs that were already set up and packaged.
 - Gave us credibility.
 - Offered the opportunity to be of service to our denomination and the presbytery.



○ More

- Having relationships with other presbyteries often facilitated by participation in Presbyterians for Earth Care
 - Got good ideas from other presbyteries.
 - Enabled us to concur with other presbytery's overtures such as on fossil fuel exports and fossil fuel divestment.
- Having a budget, however small.
 - Evidence that you are really doing things to the Presbytery.
 - Takes pressure off team members to put up the money for everything, although most of our events and conferences paid for themselves.
 - Creates discussions about priorities.



○ Thank you!

- Enjoy the journey of forming and sustaining an Earth Care Team!

