

How to Start and Sustain a Presbytery Earth Care Team

One project of the Presbytery Earth Care Program is to assist presbyteries in starting and sustaining an Earth Care Team. Below are five suggested goals for presbyteries to meet with several steps to follow to accomplish each goal. Items in parentheses are suggestions collected from presbyteries with Earth Care Teams.

GOAL 1. Form a Presbytery Earth Care Team

- a. Determine where an Earth Care Team will fit in your presbytery (Mission & Social Justice, Presbytery Mission Connections, Peace and Justice Committees)
- b. Identify 1 – 2 people to develop a core group with you. (select from the chosen committee, Earth Care Congregations, your church)
- c. Brainstorm possible directions/ideas for the Presbytery Earth Care Team (provide education, network Earth Care Congregations, procure funding for small grants to churches)
- d. Draft a description of the team and a mission statement to take to a larger group. (See ideas in GOAL 2c.)
- e. Set a date, time and location for your first Presbytery Earth Care Team meeting (at a presbytery meeting, evening with dinner, conference call/ZOOM)
- f. Reach out to others to attend your first meeting (article in presbytery news, email invitation to Earth Care Congregations, announcement and/or table at presbytery meeting with sign-up sheet)

GOAL 2. Meet as a Presbytery Earth Care Team

- a. Start with a welcome, opening or prayer, and introductions.
- b. Describe the purpose of a Presbytery Earth Care Team (to engage and support congregations in integrating creation care into their church's Christian witness and ministry)
- c. Develop a short mission statement (to inspire presbytery church members of all ages to respond to the Bible's call to appreciate, respect and responsibly care for God's gifts of His Earth and all His Living Creations; to equip presbytery members with information and resources to preserve God's Creation; to network with neighboring congregations and community organizations to share environmental stewardship information, ideas and projects to promote responsible caring for God's Creation)
- d. Set an annual goal or goals for your Presbytery Earth Care Team (to raise awareness of climate change and its impacts, assist congregations to provide education for children and adults on issues related to earth care and environmental justice, advocate for public policies or write an overture that will help to restore and/or protect God's creation)
- e. Brainstorm possible projects and choose your first project (See Schedule Activities and Events below). It should be one that can be quickly and inexpensively completed to build confidence and create momentum in your team.
- f. Discuss possible partnerships (ecumenical groups, local non-profit, state Interfaith Power and Light)