

Faith United Methodist Church, Champaign, IL: Growing Faithfully

When members of Faith United Methodist decided to increase their capacity, they decided to grow as faithful stewards of creation. They chose to build green not only because stewardship was one of the church's values, but also because of the financial benefits of increasing energy efficiency. They knew they could do it because they had heard of other churches having successful green building programs. Now, after doubling the size of their structure, by adding a worship and life center, gathering area, and education wing, they are the first LEED certified building in Champaign-Urbana and the first church in Illinois to be so to designated. Faith UMC was given the LEED silver certification in 2006. They were also awarded a grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Foundation for innovation in environmental design.

The building features an ICF wall structure made of Styrofoam and concrete, which aids in insulation, and a solar water heating system. Many of the building's materials had a high recycled content and were themselves recyclable. All faucets utilize low flow technology and all of the building's light fixtures are equipped with fluorescent bulbs. They have implemented an innovative storm water retention



plan that includes a pervious parking lot which prevents runoff and allows water to flow back into the aquifer. Now that the building is complete, Faith UMC continues to uphold an ethic of stewardship and continuously tries to improve energy efficiency. They also run a church wide recycling program.

According to Doug Abbot, Director of Church Administration, "the congregation decided to build a LEED certified building because they wanted to serve as a model for other churches and organizations in the community." Faith UMC is partnering with the University of Illinois, who offered help in the building process. They host a green building seminar for Architecture students taught by two of the university's professors.